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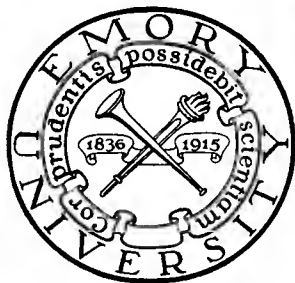
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MRS. BROWN
ON THE TURF

BY

ARTHUR SKETCHLEY,

AUTHOR OF "MRS. BROWN AT THE SKATING RINK," "THE
BROWN PAPERS," "MRS. BROWN AT BRIGHTON,"
ETC. ETC.

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MRS. BROWN ON THE TURF.

PREFACE.

As I were a-sayin' only last week to Brown, I says, "My dreams is something orful." "Well," he says, "so I should think if they're anythink like your snores, as is enuf to rouse the naybours both sides." I says, "That's the pot a-callin' of the kittle blackey, as the sayin' is ; for as to you, your snores is like rumers of wars, or the oshun a-comin' in."

"For you roars in your sleep, as sounds quite dreadful in the dead of the night when you're a-layin' awake, and a-thinkin' of them poor dear creeturs as is a-softly slumberin' on the oshun, as is words my dear mother did use to sing us to sleep with, particular when fracshus with our teeth, as never wouldn't give us no soothin' serrups nor nothink like that as 'ave brought on water on the brain

with many a infant afore now, the same as Sarah Colegrave, as will 'ave a squint to the day of 'er death, all thro' a fall off the four-post bed jest as 'er eye teeth was comin' thro' "

" Oh, bother Sarah Colegrave's eye teeth," says Brown, " they don't foretell nothink."

" No," I says, " perhaps not; but I'm sure my dreams is nothink but constant struggles for breath, as I'm a-fightin' for thro' my nose."

So Brown, he says, " It's my opinion as you'll be a deal better now as your cold is so bad without no supper."

" Well," I says, " I ain't a 'eavy feeder at no time; and as to my supper, it's more oftener bread and cheese with 'arf a pint of ale, escep' when you comes in late, with 'avin' 'ad only a snack for dinner, and then I do like a bit of somethink 'ot and comfortable, as I enjoys more than a Lord Mare's feast; but," I says, " wot's the paper say to-night, do you think as there will be war? cos," I says, " the way as everythink is a-goin' down is dreadful, leastways that's wot Mrs. Pelnim told me, as 'er 'usbin says, as is in the City, and comes 'ome that down in the mouth as he can't 'ardly eat 'is supper for a-thinkin' as he may get the sack any minnit thro' all the funs a-goin' down at 'ome and abroad; and as to the West End, Mrs. Padwick were only a-sayin' last Sunday over tea, as there was thousands upon thou-

sans as had put down their carridges and throwed their coachmen out."

"Ah!" says Brown, "there's 'undreds as didn't never ought to have set them up."

"Ah!" I says, "that's true, that is, jest like them Hoppers as was in the 'olesale poultry line, and 'ad their four-wheel shay of a Sunday jest for all the world like nobility; and 'er in a 'at and green sattin, and then come to 'ave the gas and water cut off in front of their gardin gate, and was drove that desperate, as they took and shot the moon afore the next quarter was out, or they'd 'ave 'ad the landlord down on 'em, as never 'adn't no right to a 'ouse at forty-five pounds rent, with taxes extra, as runs into money in the course of the year, tho' he did used to supply all them costers with fowls, as cleared off all 'is stale waste."

"Tho' for that matter, poultry ain't never a thing as I buys at the door, never sincc them wild ducks as was full of sand, and that far gone as I 'ad to set in the gardin while they was roastin', and 'ad to throw 'em away when they was done to a turn, leaseways, berry 'em, for fear any poor starvin' creetur should be drove to eat 'em."

"But as to war a-breakin' out among them Scurvy uns, I ain't surprised."

"Scurvy uns," says Brown, "not Scurvy uns."

"Well," I says, "it don't much matter which

they are, for they're a scurvy lot, any 'ow, the 'ole bilin', cos there was that Mr. Ollyer, as lodged along with Mrs. Padwick, he'd been in them parts, as he said the werry hair were full of wermin, as come on you in clouds a-passin' by, as must be gross neglect, cos tho' in course any one might get sich a thing on 'em, as is 'ard to be got rid on, but can be got under with the 'air cut short, and plenty of soap and water ; but as to them Turks, they glories in 'em, as they considers may be wot their grandfathers and grandmothers is changed into arter death."

"Go along with your rubbish," says Brown. "No Turks don't believe that."

"Well," I says, "some does; and it's all the same to me wot they believes, as don't 'old with their ways, nor yet their wives; and as to wars, I knowed parties once in the name of Turk, as quarrelled like cat and dog over their meals, as was a brick-field at the back of our 'ouse, out Poplar way, as would throw the clay at one another by shovel-fulls, and slap across the face, and sometimes 'ad a go in with their shovels, and would shy the beer-cans about of a Sunday, quite disgraceful, and sent a pint pot slap in at our open winder, as was reglar flattened agin Mrs. Mouncer's 'ead, as was a-cleanin' the paint, and it's lucky as she 'ad 'er 'ead turned, for if it 'ad been 'er face she wouldn't 'ave 'ad left a feature wisible."

But as to a pint pot, it's a thing you 'ardly ever sees about now-a-days, as they say no publickin won't lend out, thro' bein' stole that frequent, when left a-'angin' on the railin's, as shows wot we've come to, with all our edication, and to think that you can't leave a pint pot outside your door without 'avin' of it cadged.

It's lucky as I've give up porter, thro' not 'avin' no family now, for I wouldn't give a fardin for it out of a glass, as King George 'isself always 'ad out of its native pewter, and no doubt so did Queen Wictorier 'erself, when a-nursin', bless 'er royal 'art, as I'm sure wouldn't 'ave no wars, if she could 'elp it, as cried 'er eyes out over Inkermin, and was 'eard a-sobbin' all over the place about Almer.

And, 'ave 'eard, when she give away them meddles, were a-cryin' like a child, when she see them noble fellers come up with all their arms and legs shot off; cos I knowed a party well, as was all thro' that there Crimeer, and wotever they do, let's 'ope as next time they'll 'ave reglar nusses, and not a lot of fancy old maids, a-playin' at nussin' of the wounded, as ain't no play, goodness knows; and as to anyone a-bringin' on a war, why, in my opinion he did ought to be 'ung, drawed, and quartered along with the henemy as fired the fust shot.

For I've 'eard enuf on it, thro' Miss Pilkinton's

uncle, in the name of Grouts, as were at Waterloo, and tho' only a drummer boy, as didn't do nobody no 'arm, but got a bullet in 'is leg for all that, as stuck there to 'is dyin' day.

Not as it stopped 'im a-fightin', for he was out in Injier arter that, as 'ad a uncle afore 'im at the stormin' of Serringypetam, and saw Tipper Saib on 'is white helephant, as is ruin to anyone as rides it.

So it don't do to come no nonsense about war with me, as 'ave got two meddles, as was in my family, thro' 'avin' a consiu in the militier, as let out in licker as he bought 'em in a pawn-shop down Ratcliff 'Ighway, but denied it in 'is sober senses, as was the follerin' Sunday.

Not as ever he said as he was in haction, as they calls it, tho' he 'ad to pay money to stop onc as a young woman was a-goin' to bring agin 'im when he married Jane Coleson, as was in the fancy feather line, and throwed over Ann Clisby, as were a shoe-binder, as married a boot clicker 'erself arterwards.

I'm sure that time as war were perclained, I might as well 'ave been a-tryin' to get blood out of a stone, as a word out of Brown, as was that ropped up in the paper, as he didn't even 'ear me, and that's why all the news as I did used to get in a gen'ral way, is thro' Mrs. Padwick, partikler over tea, as is wonderful full of infermation, and so is Miss Pilkinton, for that matter, not as I can trust 'er

bein' right all thro'; but yet let 'er talk, specially over tea; for tho' Mrs. Speldin, she's a werry nice woman she is, but I do wish as she'd stop at 'ome, and not come in constant, a-goin' on about this ere war, as quite give me the jumps; eos, as I says to 'er, there always was fightin', and always will be, from Julia Seizer upwards; and well remembers the old Dook of Wellington myself, a-walkin' down Parlymint Street, as always jest touched the rim of 'is 'at with 'is finger, and wore white trousers, as were called the conkerin' 'ero wherever he went, and see 'im lay in state in Chelsea 'Ospital, were parties was killed, thro' bein' squeezed to death in the crowd.

I shan't never forgit 'is funeral, as were a lovely day, tho' Nowember, as 'ad been kep' above ground over two months, tho' serewed down, in course, in lead, and not like Lord Nelson, as were brought 'ome in rum to keep 'im, tho' some says as the sailors tapped 'im on the woyage, as lays in St. Paul's to this day.

In course Mrs. Speldin, she's orful agin war, as well she may be, for both 'er father and brother was killed in battle, afore she was born, and I don't 'old with fightin' myself, no more don't Brown, escept it might be a couple of boys 'avin' a bit of a set-to, as he says can't 'urt each other much, and let's out bad blood, and werry often does a boy

good, as wants takin' down a peg or two, as the sayin' is.

But as to a field of battle, I can't a-bear even a picter of one; tho' in course they're only fancy, cos nobody in this world couldn't set down in the middle of a battle and paint a picter of it; but, law, it must be orful.

Mrs. Speldin she knows all about it, for she went out for a nuss to the Crimeer, and to 'ear 'er talk about legs and arms bein' cut off by the basket full, let alone 'eads and 'arts as was shot thro', is enuf to cuddle your blood; and wot she's 'eard them poor dear sojers a-sayin' in their dyin' moments, is enuf to make your own 'art bleed.

Ah! poor fellers a-lougin' to see some dear loved face once more, and then a-ravin' mad with pain, and parties a-consolin' 'em, a-sayin' as they've done their dooty, that's nice cold comfort, that is; not but wot I will say as a sojer or a sailor as fights for 'is country, does 'is dooty in layin' down 'is life; but wot Brown says is them as makes the war is the parties as 'ave got to look out, as they've done right, but, as I says in gen'ral, wot do they care.

In course, if a forrin army, whether Rooshuns or Prooshins, was to try and land at Dover or even at Margit, why, everyone would turn out, dowu to the niggers on the sands, and give 'em a good jackettin', and send 'em back agin, and teach 'em

not for to dare to come near us, as never will be slaves; but as to our a-goin' to war for glory, as they calls it, Queen Wictorier wouldn't allow sich goin's on, like that good-for-nothin' old wagger-bone, old Bonyparty did used to.

In my opinion, when they cort 'im, they did ought to 'ave took and 'ung 'im like a dog; and so no doubt they would, if he 'adn't took and put 'is tail atween 'is legs arter Waterloo, and run aboard of a Inglish ship, for protection, as is wot he wouldn't get now-a-days, cos Cobdin and Bright 'ave done away with it.

I do 'ope as that there Bonyparty's boy 'ave been brought up proper by 'is ma, as 'ave 'ad plenty of time for to teach 'im 'is dooty, and pint out the horrors of 'is family ways, as 'ave brought 'em to misery, tho' I must say as they're better off than they ever 'ad a right to be, as spring from nothink, as is wot aggrawates the French, our a-treatin' 'em like real kings and queens.

But as to this war, some says as Roosher is up to 'er old games, a-fermentin' of things thro' a-wantin' to collar Turkey, as, in course, won't be allowed. I say they did ought to 'ave put in the brokers, and sold them Turks up when they didn't pay their debts like they do Christshuns as can't pay.

Jest the same as they did with Mrs. Martin, as lived oppersite us, and let lodgin's, poor thing, and

got behind with 'er rent, and in debt all round the nayber'ood, and was sold up, with the bed took from under 'er, as the sayin' as, as never owed no-think like them Turks.

Cos, in course, that Sultin knowed as he must bust up, when he come over 'ere that time, as he lived in Buckin'am Pallis, and no doubt tried to borrer money of Queen Wictorier, as in course couldn't lend 'im none, but thro' Parlymint, as didn't seem to see it.

In course, it's all werry well for Parlymint to give money to Queen Wictorier and 'er Royal family, but we ain't a-goin' to support a lot of 'eathen Turks in their willanies; and that's why Brown were always agin that Rooshin war; cos tho' he don't 'old with John Bright, yet he always did say as he were right about the Crimeer, as wouldn't keep the Rooshins long away from the Turks.

"But," as I says to Mrs. Speldin, "'owever we got thro' it goodness knows, the way as things was managed, wot with stores of beastliness bein' sent out instead of 'olesome food for our sojers, as 'adn't no shoes nor clothes to wear, and 'ad to borrer them of the French, and the 'ay for the poor 'osses was full of weeds, so as they couldn't eat it, not even when starvin'."

And all round there wasn't nothing but robbery and jobbery, with things all packed wrong, so as they couldn't get at the things as was wanted for

the sick and wounded, thro' 'avin' packed 'em under all the cannon balls and 'eavy things, as lots on 'em was sent out as wasn't never wanted.

No doubt war is a fine thing for them as supplies the powder, shot, guns, clothes and purwishuns. Oh! they all wotes for war, and a fine thing they makes out of it; and then comes all the misery, not only wounds, and limbs knocked off, but bein' starved, and 'avin' your feet froze off, let alone fevers and agues, as comes on thro' neglect.

If we must 'ave war we must, but I do 'ope as them as 'aves the settlin', of it will do their dooty next time, and not be full of escuses. One a-sayin' as it ain't my work, and another sayin' it wasn't my place, and all like that; if we go to war let the sojers and sailors be thought about fust; let 'em have plenty to eat and drink to keep up their sperrits, and good clothes and a decent place to sleep in, and not be left to die like dogs in a ditch.

It's all right, in course, as the generals and all them swells should be took care on, cos their lives is precious, thro' 'avin' to direct others, and no doubt they'll do their dooty, like fine fellers as they are, and 'ave as much to put up with as the sojers, but all did ought to be thought about, and nothink left to chance, nor yet to a parcel of thieves as robs the army afore battle, and is quite as bad as them

wile wretches as goes over a battle-field when it's over, a-plunderin' and murderin' the wounded as well as the dead.

"So I do 'ope as Queen Wictorier will jest 'ave 'er royal weather eye up, as the sayin' is, and speak out plain, and say as she don't care wot she pays to 'ave things all right for 'er army and navy, but if she ketches any of them purwidars up to their larks, as she'll 'ang 'em from yard arms to yard arms."

"Ah!" says Brown, "that's all werry fine for the Rooshins, as is a absolute Suvin, but Queen Wictorier, she's only constitutional."

"Then," I says, "give me Rooshins for war, cos if Queen Wictorier is obligated to be always a-thinkin' wot'll suit 'er constitution best, why she can't never go to war with no comfort."

"But," says Brown, "we ain't a-goin' to war, we're a-goin' to be neutril."

"Ah!" I says, "that means as we don't side with nobody, and gets kicked by all; but I must say as I do 'ope them Germans will get into a 'ole, and 'ave the French down on them."

"Ah!" says Brown, "that Beastmark ain't no fool; he knows his way about, and if he could only square the Pope he'd be all right."

I says, "Wotever does he care about the Pope."

"No," says Brown, "but 'eve got lots about 'im as docs, and if there was to be a war he wouldn't want to 'ave the Pope agin 'im, on 'is back."

I says, "Well, don't let's talk any more about wars, nor yet Popes to-night, for Mrs. Speldin 'ave quite give me the creeps over them wounded, as was all fine young men in their prime. As it's orful to think of them bein' all cut off, as is wanted to work 'ard at lots of things as would be useful in the world, and not go about a-cuttin' of their feller creetur's throats, tho' in course they must do it if they're ordered to, or else turn rebels, like them Yankee-doodles did, jest a hundred years ago. As 'ave seen the place where they took up arms and fought agin King George, as is Bunkers 'Ill, and got a lickin' for their pains, and only got the day at last thro' the French a-'elpin' 'em, and the English not a-carin' about goin' on with fightin' 'em, so we give 'em up, and a good thing too."

"But," I says, "wot's this ere caper mean about old Beastmark a-resignin'?"

"Ah!" says Brown, "a old fox, he's up to some game."

I says, "Preaps he's like me, sick and tired of 'earin' this war talked about, so have jest got out of the way so as them parties may come to blows when 'is back's turned, and ho'll come back and punch their 'eads all round."

Says Brown, "I'm blessed if I can make it out, them Rooshins is a deep lot, and means to 'ave them Turks on the 'ip some day."

"Ah!" I says, "I suppose so, but I do 'ope if they seizes their goods, as they'll pay their debts, as is wot that there Congress did ought to have made 'em done."

But as to these ere Congresses, they're things as seems to me like a sheep's 'ead, all jaw, as the sayin' is, cos wotever good comes on 'em, as I'm sure no one ain't 'ad no better 'ealth since them doctors all met for a congress to talk about them hills as flesh is air to, as the sayin' is.

As to flesh bein' air, well, in course, there couldn't be no 'ealth without air, and plenty on it.

Then as to them parsons as 'ad a congressin, why, they'd better stop at 'ome.

But, law bless me, parsons is like the rest of the world, they must have somethink to jaw over; and it's wonderful what a deal of good them ministers does; as is all that ankshus for to go and convert the 'eathen, as it's as much as ever they can do to get 'em to stop and preach to them as is at 'ome, and, goodness knows, there's 'eathen enuf all over the place without a-goin' out to Africker to look arter 'em, as is wot Dean Stanley, and Canin Lidden, and Spurgin is all mad to do, only the Archbishop of Canterbury won't 'ave it.

“Cos,” he says, “if anybody did ought to go and be eat up by them black beasts, he’s the party for to do it, as no doubt that Merrykin as ’ave been and went to conwert them niggers with ’is ’splosive bullets, ’ave made them poor hignorant creeturs bless the werry name of Christshuns, jest the same as I remembers a-’earin’ in Merryker ’ow them Pilgrims fathers as they called ’em, took and murdered the Injuns, and ’ung the Quakers, and all out of brotherly love, as is so werry beautiful.”

Brown, he’s orful down on all them Mishunaries, and calls ’em all ’umbugs, but I won’t ’ave it, for I says it’s a werry lovely sight for to see a young minister as can’t get on ’ere thro’ bein’ no great ’and at preachin’, with a increasin’ family, a-goin’ out with every comfort for to try ’is luck among ’eathens, as in course can’t understand whether he can preach or not, but is a example to them as wouldn’t support the young man and ’is family ’ere, cos he hadn’t got the gift of the gab, for he made a good livin’ over there.

But Brown says they’re a lazy lot. So others said of young Sam Perkins, as give up bein’ a wareouseman in the City jest to preach the Gospil, and a nice thing he made on it, as shows as wirtue’s its own reward.

For in no time he got a fine chapel over the water somewheres, and then married a rich woman,

as was a serous bookseller's dorter, and now he's a reglar swell, and a Wicar, tho' 'is parents was quite poor 'umble people.

As to Brown a-goin' on aud sayin' as it's all trade. And, I must say as it's werry much the same thing, tho' I can't abear to 'ear 'im say it. In course that young man would have gone out to them 'eathens, only all the young ladies would 'ave fretted so arter him, and a many ou 'em would 'ave give up goin' to church, as some on 'em did when he got married.

Brown, he larfs and says they'd all turn Mormons if it wasn't so far off, but that's the worst of Brown, he is so orful down upon any one as he thinks is a 'umbug; and that's why he won't never have nothink to do with no teetotal rubbish, but as I says, let them as can't trust theirselves with a bottle, nor yet a glass, never 'ave none in the 'ouse, tho' in my opinion it's only them as 'ave been lost their self-respects as takes, for I'm sure a nicer lady never drored breath than Mrs. Dauncy, poor thing, as a niece of mine lived with over Brixton way.

I don't esactly know wot Dauncy were, escept a orsey sort of a blackguard, as lived on the Turf, but would lay a beld all day a-readin' rubbishin' books, and sayin' as he were that weak as he must 'ave 'is breakfast in bed, as were fried pigs' chittlens and bottle stout, as ain't a light

meal, and then he'd get up and swear all over the place like a dragoon broke loose, if there wasn't a nice 'ot meal for 'im afore he went out, as were in gen'ral about dusk, and never see 'is 'ome agin till daylight, even in winter time.

As to 'er, poor soul, she bore up wonderful with four children, and lived on the smell of a match, as the sayin' is, for gettin' 'is meals nice, and did used to rite 'ome to 'er parents, as weren't over well off, for money to give 'im, and would pawn everythink but 'er weddin' ring, so as he shouldn't go out without money in 'is pocket.

Sometimes he'd come with a lot of silver and copper, as I think must 'ave been a skittle sharp, or else a good 'and at billiards; and when he were flush, as the sayin' is, he'd 'ave the place reglar flowin' with wine and sperrits, as he'd press 'er to drink.

I do believe at fust as she only done it to please 'im. Then sometimes he'd take and stop away for days together, and my niece 'ave told me as he've been away for three weeks at a time, a-leavin' that poor thing without a shillin', and espectin' 'er confinement every day, as must 'ave died or 'ave went to the workus, only but for 'er mother coming up, as see 'er thro' 'er trouble.

When he did come back he 'adn't 'ardly a shoe to 'is foot, and soon arter 'ad the brokers in the

'ouse, and the 'ole family would 'ave been turned into the street only but for 'er brother a-comin' ome from sea as paid them out, and give money to both on 'em, and that feller he could be mealy-mouthed enuf 'afore that brother, and while he was there kep' on a-callin' 'er love and dear till it was enuf to make the cat sick to 'ear 'im.

He be'aved nice to 'er arterwards when that brother as went to sea agin pitched mast over 'ead down into the 'old when arf seas over, and never spoke agin.

They was four nice children as she 'ad, and pretty be'aved enuf till the poor mother, bein' left alone so much with' em, got a 'uggin' the cruet, as the sayin' is, and were, I must say decidedly, moppy one evenin' as I went in there; but as my niece could bear testamentary to it were not 'er 'abits till she were drove pretty nigh wild by 'is goin's on.

Not as that's any escuse, but it makes it wuss for the man, for she always were a poor weak fool and reglar leant on 'im, and where she found out all 'is doin's, and 'ow he 'ad plenty of money to spend on others while she was a-settin' without a candle thro' 'avin' 'ad the gas cut off thro' not bein' paid up; so couldn't do a bit of fine work as she get a shillin' or two by.

But she lost that thro' a-pawnin' some fine

shirts as was give 'er at a shop for to embroider the fronts as wouldn't persecute 'er, and then at last 'er goods was seized, and she 'ad to go into one room ; and then certingly them children did lead 'er a life as would make game on 'er when in licker, and took to runnin' wild about the streets night and day.

I 'adn't 'eard nothink on 'er for some time, over three years and more, when my niece as 'ad married worry well come to see me and gave me such a account of poor Mrs. Delauncy as she said were to be seen rollin' drunk on the pavement afore twelve o'clock in the day.

I were sorry tho' as I says to my niece I can't make out 'ow any one as 'ave been brought up decent can let theirselves down like that.

I think it must 'ave been a month arter that as I went to Margit, and there I met that poor thing dressed out a objic, in a fancy dress, and 'er face all flour.

She come up and says, " Oh ! Mrs. Brown, Fred is that kind, he allows me a pound a week, and 'ave took the children."

I says, " And pray where is he ? "

" Oh ! " she says, " he lives in grand style, and keeps a shay, and got a fine ouse and garden."

" Oh ! " I says, " Indeed, and leaves you like this ! Well," I says, " you knows your own busi-

ness best, but if he were my 'usbin, I'd give 'im somethink for 'imself, and if I cort them as inticed 'im from me, I'd mark 'em, I can tell you."

She says, "Oh! do come and 'ave tea, and I'll tell you all about 'im."

I says, "I don't want to 'ear nothink about sich a waggerbone, and you don't think as I'd stoop to drink a drop of tea at his expense. No," I say, "if I could 'elp you I'd come to see you, but none of your tea for me;" and so I took and wished 'er good day, and off I went, glad enough to get away from 'er, for she were more than 'arf tight.

I couldn't abear to see the poor wretch as never set eyes on agin, for she took and pulled a parryfeen lamp all over 'er, and were found a cinder under 'er own table.

I were told as not even 'er children shed a tear over 'er, and that feller went about a-sayin' as she weren't 'is lorful wife; but 'ad to eat 'is words, a-lyin' blackguard, for her mother died soon after, and he had to prove 'is marridge to get some of the property as come to 'im.

He run up agin me one day close agin St. George's Church in the Boro', and says, "Oh, Mrs. Brown, so you see I've lost poor dear Polly!"

"Yes," I says, "so I 'ear, and," I says, "if ever a man murdered his wife, you killed 'er."

He turned deadly white, and I says, "Yes! and 'er blood will rise up some day agin you, and stick to you and to your coffin."

He says, "Don't speak to me."

I says, "I didn't want to speak to you. You spoke to me, and now you've got your anser."

He'd took 'old of my 'and quite agin my will; so I clutched 'im round the rist till I'd 'ad my say, and then let 'im go, and he were off like a shot.

Not as I wished 'im any 'arm, but I do 'ope as afore he dies he may think of the cruel way as he treated that poor thing, as reglar doted on the ground as he walked on, and I do believe would 'ave let 'im kick 'er to death, and more fool she. Cos if she'd 'ave showed more proper sperrit, and kep' away from the bottle, she'd 'ave 'ad the pull some day; but certingly if ever a woman were drove to drinkin', it was 'er, and no doubt there's a many as is full of misery, as a drop do give comfort to, and more's the pity as they should fly to it, as always rounds on 'em in the hend.

I did 'ear as Delauncy took and married a lusty party, as were a reglar soaker, with a harm like a coal-'eaver, as were as mild as milk till he married 'er, and then turned on 'im and give 'im rats, as the Yankees says; and the last as I 'eard on 'im, he were seen a-goin' into a 'ouse one Sunday eveniu'

in 'is coat sleeves, with a jug and a bottle of sper-rits, with two black eyes, and 'is nose all scratched down.

So I 'ope he's got 'is gruel, and found 'is match, as is a reglar brimstone, and one as he can't put upon as he did the other.

I never 'eard anythink about the gals, but the boys all turned out thieves, and was sent to reformatories, as is better places than the 'omes they 'ad, and that's why that poor ereetur is to blame, for if she'd 'ave kep' 'erself respectable, she'd 'ave kep' them boys straight, cos it's all a mother's fault when young children goes 'rong; but if a woman's a fool, why, in course she can't 'elp it, and that's my only comfort in thinkin' over poor Mrs. Delauney, that she was such a fool as she's more to be pitied than blamed, as the sayin' is.

Certingly it is thro' knowin' of sich charaeters as 'ave set me agin the turf, as they calls it, as is wot we must all come to some day, tho' in course we needn't all drink ourselves under it, nor yet under the table, as did used to be the fashion when my dear mother were a gal.

I can remember myself, when there was a deal more drinkin' arter dinner than is allowed now, and as to jinin' the ladies, they never did at Alderman Wittles, as was my fust place, as was fond of 'is glass, tho' never to make a beast of 'isself; and

to see anyone a-rollin' in the road is enuf to make a noble creetur like a 'orse, look down on 'is master ; but as I've said afore, both 'osses and drink is werry well in their way, but nobody didn't ought to let either run away with 'em.

MRS. BROWN ON THE TURF.

—o.—

No doubt as the 'orse is a noble hanimal, and meant for the companion of man, as Miss Pilkinton were a-readin' to me the other evenin' atween the lights, as she can see by, but is blind man's 'olliday to me, as the sayin' is. So I says, "I don't see as a 'orse is much of a companion, as ain't to be expected from a dumb creetur; not but wot many 'orses shows theirselves much more sensibler than their betters."

"Oh!" says Miss Pilkinton, "it means as man and 'orse was meant to be always together."

I says, "But that's wot they always ain't, for therc was Mr. Cuddleton, the pork butcher, in the Mile End Road, as never could stick to 'is pig-skin, but was no sooner on 'is 'orse than he were off agin like a shot, and 'ad to give up the Easter 'Unt, as he were a-goin' to, for keep on that 'orse's back he couldn't."

"Ah!" says she, "he can't be 'arf a man as can't keep 'is seat."

"Well," I says, "I won't say that when I reeollects what I've went thro' myself on donkey-baek at Margit, as is both four-footed quodruples."

"I presumes as you mean quodroopids," says she.

I says, "I knows wot I means, and so do you, and if you don't, it ain't no great eonsequence."

She says, "Don't lose your temper over it."

I says, "Lose my temper, indeed; it ain't likely as I'm a-goin' to, but no one don't like to be took up short over a word, as don't mean nothink." So as I didn't want no words, we dropped the 'orses; for jest then in come Mrs. Padwick, as don't like the subjiect, thro' bein' of a 'orsey family, and always begrudges the money as 'er 'usban' 'ave lost, and 'is father afore 'im, thro' 'orsin' the mails on the North Road, afore railways was thought on, as we shall 'ave to go back to, if them railroads goes on a-killin' us like this, in eold blood, on all the lines, as seems a-tryin' which can kill the most at a time.

Cos as I says to our gal as said it were an axident as the 'andle of the milk jug come off in 'er 'and, I says, "Don't tell me about axidenees, it must 'ave been craeked afore, as no doubt you done it yourself, in washin' of it up;" and so it is with them railways; they don't look to see as they're all right afore the trains comes along, and, in eourse,

if there's ever sich a little bit of a rail a-stickin' up or stickin' out, why, it can easy upset a train a-goin' at that rate; not but wot I 'ave 'eard Brown say as the quickest trains is the safest; and certingly if you are a-goin' to be killed in a train, the sooner you're out of your misery the better; leastways, it's werry easy to talk about bein' out of your misery, but we don't know nothink about it, whether we're out of it or into it.

But one thing I will say, if Queen Wictorier can be took them thousands of miles every year by rail to Scotland and back, without 'avin' no 'itch, why can't the rest on us, as is all liable to the same things, whether we 'ave crowns on our 'eads or not.

Not as Quecu Wictorier, bless 'er royal 'art, don't never travel with 'er crown on, thro' bein' that 'umble, and can't a-bear no show, partikler the waight of a crown, as she couldn't put 'er 'ead back in the train, with that 'ard thing a-pressin' 'er royal brow, as the sayin' is.

But, law blcss me! talkin' of 'orses, they certingly is a noble sight in 'er royal carridge agoin' to open Parlymint, and if she were to take and drive all thro' England like that, she would be worth a-scein'

As is wot old King George did used to do in goin' from Windsor to Weymouth, as I've 'eard a aunt of my dear mother's talk about; as see 'im

change 'orses at Salsberry, where she were brought up, and said as Queen Charlotte's nose showed as she were up to snuff, as the sayin' is. But law! things is so changed now-a-days, cos I can remember King George the Fourth a-bein' crowned myself, as walked all the way from Westminster Abbey to Westminster 'All, under cover in course thro' 'avin' of 'is crown on.

Not as I can remember any think, but the crowd as were frightful and my mother a-thinkin' me crushed under the 'orses' feet close agin Milbank Street, when the guards drove the people back thro' Queen Caroline a-tryin' to push 'er away thro' into the Abbey, as some say were the wuss for drink, as ain't a proper way for any one to go to church in.

I've 'eard say as she were dressed out in pink and silver, as ain't a good mixture, and painted up to the eyes, as don't look well by daylight.

Not as they did ought to 'ave took 'er up, and tried 'er for 'er life, and would 'ave cut off 'er 'ead no doubt, like Ann Bullen, if King George 'ad 'ad 'is way like old 'Arry,—a 'ard 'arted brute with no feelins,—as certingly did cut them good ladies of is'n uncommon short; not as ever I thought much of Ann Bullen, as couldn't 'ave been much good, or she'd 'ave brought up that dorter of 'ern better, as turned out a nasty old 'ussey—leastways, that's my opinion.

But, talkin' of 'orses, wot a singler thing it is as they should lead so many into bad ways, and drive 'em to drinkin' in the end.

For there was the young man at Bethel's, the draper's, as married the young lady at the 'aber-dasher's opposite, and might 'ave done well, all but for 'im a winnin' of a pony at Newmarket, as were 'is ruin thro' 'er 'avin' of a uncle down there as kep' a public 'ouse, and asked 'em down to see 'im jest six months arter they was married. As was meant kind, no doubt, but ended bad ; thro' 'im a-takin' to idle ways, as is wot too many 'ollidays often leads to.

Not as he were altogether to blame in bein' throwed out of a place thro' 'is employer a-dyin', and the business broke up jest about that time ; and 'er bein' obliged to give up 'er situation ; and so it were as they went to stop along with 'er mother, and then passed on to this uncle as were the ruin on 'im.

She come up to town, and called in at Mrs. Padwick's, quite full of this ere pony as 'er 'usban 'ad won. I says, " Got it a raffle, I suppose ! "

" No," she says, " fair bettin', and if he'd took 'em all round, it would 'ave been a monkey."

" Well," I says, " I'd rather 'ave a pony than a monkey, unless you was a-goin' about with a horgin to get your bread, as ain't a thing as would suit a Englishman."

She says, "Oh! I see you ain't up to sportin' terms."

"No," I says, "I never were of a sportive turn myself; but," I says, "a monkey would 'ave been a downright nuisance."

She says, "I wish we'd got 'im, cos," she says, "it's no use bettin' trifles."

"Oh!" I says, "I don't 'old with bettin' at all, and as to winnin' a pony, he'll eat 'is 'ead off afore you can sell 'im."

She burst out a-larfin', and says, "Oh! Mrs. Brown, wot a dear jolly old green'orn you are. Why, a pony means twenty-five pounds, and a monkey five hundred!"

"Well then," I says, "you take my advice and make your 'usban stop it, or he'll come to grief; cos if he'd lost, where could he 'ave got a pony to pay with; and as to a monkey, why I don't suppose any one would 'ave trusted 'im with one, not if it means all that money."

"Oh!" she says, "bless you, we shall soon be a-ridin' in our own carriage."

I says, "Oh, indeed!" a-thinkin' as that would most likely be the perlice wan as in course belongs to us all, tho' werry few would care to 'ave a ride in it.

But troo that young woman's words proved, as the name were Belper; for they come up to town

and 'ad a reglar willer up Camdin Town way; not as ever I went to see 'er, but she often dropped in at Mrs. Padwick's, when a-comin' to the West Hend for to shop, dressed to death, as the sayin' is, tho' for the most part wot I calls rubbish on 'er back.

Not but wot it ain't worth while to go and give the money for a gownd now-a-days, as parties did used to when I were young, and a 'ansome silk dress did used to last you 'arf your life.

Not as I 'olds with wearin' things that long time, as wants pickin' to pieces and fresh linin', or else gets werry stuffy.

But as to a welwet, as lasted over forty years, why it's enuf for to spread diseases, as did ought to be fresh dressed and done up every seven year, at the werry least. Not as I can a-bear them tight-fittin' gownds, as they was a-wearin', without no jupongs under 'em, as they might as well 'ave wore trousers at once; but as long as it's the fashun, I do believe as parties would wear anythink or no-think, if it wasn't for the perlice a-interferin'. But as to goin' to Askit 'Eath races, I never shouldn't if they 'adn't made up a party, for Mrs. Padwick's friends from the country, as 'adn't never seen the Prince and Princess of Wales, nor yet the rest of the Royal family. So, in course, I weren't a-goin' to throw no cold water over it, as the sayin' is, as

were goin' by rail, and to meet friends on the 'Eath, as lives out by Stanes, and was to bring lunch for us all.

I says, "Do they know 'ow many's the party?"

"Oh!" says Mrs. Padwick, "I said as we should be five, and I know they must be nine at least."

"Then," I says, "we shall make a cold fore-quarter of lamb look foolish, even with a pigeon pie throwed in, and I should say did ought to 'ave a cold tung and pastry, with bread and cheese and butter, with salad for them as likes it."

Says Miss Pilkinton, "Why, one would think you was a-purvidin' for a siege; we ain't wolves."

"No," I says, "I know you ain't, nor yet sheep, as can live on grass."

So I didn't say nothink, but I 'ad a tung biled, and took and cut it all up in sandwiches, as made a good packet, as I stowed away in my 'and basket, with some biscuits and my flask full of good pale Old Cognac.

It were a lowery day, tho' dusty, as we started for Askit, as was me and Mrs. Padwick and Miss Pilkinton, and there was young Edwards, as is a nephew of Mrs. Padwick, and his wife, a nico young 'ooman, as requires care.

I do 'ate a railway with a crowd, as drives you all over the place, and no porters to be got; and

it's a mussy as we got seats, for the carridges was that full as we was scrouged up dreadful.

I can't say as I enjoyed the journey there much, thro' the dust as were stiflin', and parties in our carriage was a-smokin', thro' bein' in the bettin' line, so in course wouldn't be spoke to, escept when they wanted to be a-takin' and a-givin' odds all the way, and got a-chaffin' me about bein' the fav'rit agin the field, as I says I were a fav'rit once; and as to fields, they ain't in my line, tho' I knowed Battersea well enuf, with the Red 'Ouse and the pigeon matches.

"Ah!" says one young feller, "you looks like a sportin' character."

I says, "I'm a character as will bear inspectin', as is more than a many can say."

Then the lot bust out a-larfin', and said to the one as 'ad spoke, "'The old gal 'ad you there,'" as looked quite chop-fallen.

It's a good bit of a ride to Askit, and I were glad when we got there, as ain't much of a walk from the course, as was werry nice company all about, but nothing to the Darby for jolliness.

Cos for my part, give me goin' to the Darby in a shay-cart, with jest four, and start early, with your own purwishuns and beer, and plenty to spare if you do 'appen to meet a friend or two, and not 'ave to turn your 'ead away, as if you didn't sec

'em, as is mean ways, as I wouldn't stoop to myself.

Not as them trips always turns out 'appy, for I'm sure there was the Plymptons, as was a light-'arted couple as ever you might meet in a days walk, as the sayin' is, tho' not parties to walk, thro' both a-inclinin' to fleshy, as is why they went out in their own shay-cart, as were as light as a feather, and a stout 'orse, else I wouldn't never 'ave went, nor wouldn't 'ave went, only 'er mother, as is in the name of Emmets, wouldn't go without me.

So jest for peace' sake, I give way, not as I cared about it, thro' not bein' the Darby, but Hoax, as always falls on a Friday, and is a day as some parties won't begin nothink on, tho' others reddicules it, the same as the sailor as called 'is ship Friday, and sailed on a Friday, and never come back.

Not as I 'olds with temptin' providence, as the sayin' is, and must say as when I 'ad my ceilin's white-washed on a Friday, the men broke two panes of glass, and cracked another in the back parlour, thro' the tressells a-givin' way, as was put up careless, no doubt, the same as that ladder as fell in paintin' the front of a 'ouse in Whitechapel, and ketched Melia Parsons jest across the nape of 'er neck, as 'er chinion pertected, tho' a frightful bruise where the blade boues meets.

But as I were a-sayin' to Mrs. Emmets the night afore we went to that Hoax, I 'ad my misgivins' as things wasn't all square, and if Plympton wasn't took up jest as he were a-steppin' into 'is shay cart, poor feller, as was a case of embezzlement, as he 'adn't no more to do with than the child unborn, but was werry nigh 'er death, thro' the shock, as I never thought would see daylight, as 'ave always set me agin races. But certingly Askit is a noble sight, for to see the Royal carriages come on the course, as we was jest in time for, and I were took aback at seein' the Prince of Wales a-lookin' that stout, as is too much flesh for 'is 'ears.

She do look wonderful, poor dear, not a day older than when I see 'er at St. Paul's, a-goin' to give thanks along with Queen Wictorier for 'im a-gettin' thro' that fever, as is werry proper, and wot old King George did used to whenever he come to 'is right senses, as were of a pious turn, and they do say wanted to turn Quaker when he were young, thro' bein' that took up with a Quaker gal in the name of Lightfoot, not as I thinks much of them parties as changes their religions thro' gals as they're a-runnin' arter, cos I'm sure there's some young fellows as would 'ave to change once a month at the werry least. I've 'eard my father say, as were a waiter, as he 'ave come down to Askit in carriages and four with the fust nobility, but that was in George the

Fourth's time, as were always the King all over.

Not as I 'olds with 'is morals, as was shakey, but then, I says, it's more the fault of them bold brazin' creeturs as werry often throws theirselves at a Prince's 'ead, as is in general their weak pints, as the sayin' is.

But I 'ave 'eard say as Queen Victorie did used to 'ave a grand turn out for Askit, and 'ad 'er 'ouse full of company for the races, the same as Mrs. Edmunds 'ad, as lived near Sutton, all Darby week.

But one time the Hempror of Roosher, he come over to the races, and give gold cups away all over the place, and left oue behind 'im as they've been a-runnin' for ever since.

Ah! he were somethink like a Hempror, he were.

Not as I 'olds with 'is bullyin' ways, as wouldn't suit me, nor yet Brown neither, as will pay our rates and taxes cheerful, and 'ave give the water rate a cup of tea afore now, but wouldn't be bullied for all that, and 'ave appealed afore now when too much over-rated.

It were a lovely day, and we'd 'ad a little refreshment when we fust got there, and then we stopped and see the Royal cortage come down the course, with the party, as looks arter the Royal 'orses a-ridin' fust, as is a nobleman, and looked

quite the Master of the 'Orse, as they called 'im.

And there was that there Princess as some considers 'ave let 'erself down in a-marryin' of a Scotchman, but he's a werry nice civil spoke young gentleman, as see 'im myself up in the 'Ighlands; and see a good deal on 'im at Obun, where I were a-stayin', thro' 'im a-goin' about and dancing in 'is kilt.

But the party as I takes a pleasure in seein', were that there dear kind lookin' soul, that Duchess of Tackt, as is a Princess all over. She's wot I calls a fine figger, with a smile like a angel, and if she ain't 'appy, she ought to be, that's all, as I says.

There was a deal of cheerin' and oorayin', but in course nothing to wot there would 'ave been if Queen Wictorier would come, as I did see once myself at them races. I got a werry nice sight of the race, jest opposite the grand stand, a-settin' on the sharfs of a cart with the 'orse took out, so in course couldn't run away with me, as is a thing I've a 'orror on.

It is a lovely sight to see them noble 'orses, with their coats a-shinin' like sattin, rode by them bits of boys, as manages them wonderful. It always gives me a turn when I sees them noble creeturs come down to a cab, even tho' it might be a 'ansom. It does seem so 'ard on 'em, arter bein' sich pets, and

winnin' sich lots of money, as they should be drove to death when past work, and come to a nacker's yard, for to end their days with nothink to eat but a downright bag of bones, and them frequent a-comin' thro' their skins. Not but wot some of them sportin' parties treats their good ladies no better; for my dear mother did used to wash for two as lived down Brompton way, as 'ad every thing as their 'arts could think of. A-goin' off to races in po' shayeses, that dressed, bless you, enuf to make you stare your eyes out. They wasn't partikler young, not even when I were a little girl, tho' I remember 'em 'avin' lace dresses got up. Well, I 'eard as both them men was transported, and one 'ung'isself with a leather strap aboard the vessel a-goin' out; and as to them two females, why, one were a-dyin' in Chelsea Workus, where my own mother went to see 'er, and the other, she wasn't 'ardly never out of prisin for either drink or beggin', as 'ad both been fine womin in their time, no doubt.

That's why my dear mother did always used to say as there wasn't but one straight course thro' life, and that's wot a race course always ain't.

When the fust race were over, we set about a-lookin' for Mrs. Padwick's friends, as 'ad drove over in a wagginett, and was drored up by the 'eath side.

The moment I set eyes on 'em I see as they was

a mean stuck-up lot, for they was all a-eatin' and a-gobblin' as fast as ever they could, and didn't purtend to see us at fust.

In course I knows myself too well for to go a-thrustin' myself forard, like Miss Pilkinton, as took and climbed up into that wagginett, a-showin' of 'er broomsticks of legs, afore she was even asked.

Some on 'em called out to Aunt Padwick, a-sayin' there was a seat for 'er.

She didn't want to get up, but I made that poor young Mrs. Edwards, she was reglar turnin' faint for want of somethink.

But them parties was reglar 'ogs, and went on a-eatin' and never offered to make room for that young woman, and as was kep' a-standin' on the step.

As to me, they never even looked at me, as might as well 'ave been the dirt under their feet.

So I didn't say nothink, but give Mrs. Padwick the wink to come away, and so she did; as for Mrs. Edwards, 'er 'usban' took and lifted 'er down the moment as he see 'ow she were treated, a-seein' as she wasn't welcome at a glance.

We walked away along the 'eath, a-gettin' clear of the carridges, and then took and set down on a bank, and there I opened my sandwiches, as we did relish, thro' bein' cut fresh, and not too much butter.

Mr. Edwards, he went and got us some bottled stout, and we certingly did enjoy our meal, as we eat up every bit, jest as Miss Pilkinton come up in a nice temper, and says we was nice parties to leave 'er behind, as 'adn't 'ad 'ardly a bit to eat, and as to drink, they'd been and gobbled it all up.

I says, "Why, I see you with a pewter to your mouth."

"Yes," she says, "and nothink but a little drop of froth at the bottom."

I says, "It's a pity as you didn't come with us at once."

"Oh!" she says, "I couldn't be so rude as to leave friends."

I says, "You thought you was in for a good thing, and pretended not to see us goin' away."

She says, "It's false. I never give you a thought."

"Well," I says, "I don't want no words, here's some biskits and cheese, and there's best part of a bottle of stout, as is all as we've got left. So you'd better take and put it between you and grief."

She reglar flew out and said I were a false friend, and all manner; so I let 'er 'ave 'er say, and by the time as she finished the stout, she were in a better humour, but not right.

I says to Mrs. Padwick, "Do you want to go back and say good-bye to your carridge friends?"

She says, "Certainly not, as be'aved downright shabby."

"Yes," says Miss Pilkinton, "and nice friends as turned you into redicule, and as to Mrs. Brown, they said you was a old fish-fag."

I says, "I'm sure I don't care, and as it wasn't said to my face it wasn't intended for me to 'ear, so no insults intended, and none shan't be took."

She says, "You ain't the sperrit of a mouse, for if they'd 'ave said 'arf of me as they did of you, I'd 'ave took and battered their 'ats in."

"But," I says, "you forget as I didn't 'ear it."

"Oh!" she says, "you doubt my word then."

"Well," I says, "in my opinion the dog as will fetch will carry, and I can't abear no mischief makin' ——"

She says, "Who's a-makin' mischief?"

I says, "You are, as 'ave got a tung in your 'ead a mile too long."

She jumps up a-sayin' as it served 'er right for a-jinin' of 'er inferiors arter a bordin' school edication, and off she went.

Jest then down came the rain with a thunderstorm a-follerin', and it's lucky as we wasn't far from the 'otel, as Edwards knowed the party as kep it well, but 'adn't no ideer as he were the same.

So we got in and 'ad every think as were agree-

able, including a meat tea, and didn't go 'ome till a late train, when the rush was gone.

When we was at the station there were poor Anna Maria Pilkinton, a drowned rat, and decided a little bit on.

I went and spoke to 'er kind, but she were dead sulky, so I left 'er to Mrs. Padwick, as got 'er into the train, and 'ome we went; and then me and Anne Maria shook 'ands cos I didn't want to quarrel.

Not as I 'olds with 'er little tattlin' ways, and 'ates tattlers and tale-bearers, as the sayin' is; tho' in course if there wasn't, there'd be a end of talkin' as would be reglar agin nature; and so as it ain't talkin' about parties' characters, nor yet runnin' of 'em down, like a royal yott, why, it ain't no 'arm.

Not as I 'old with Miss Pilkinton a-repeatin' all the foolish things as goes on in a family, as often makes mischief out of nothink, the same as Mrs. Pollin's gal as made all the mischief next door over the palin's thro' a-sayin' as Mrs. Pollin 'ad found a white lace wail in a cab, as were a scarf as 'er own aunt 'ad give 'er, but werry like a wail as the lady next door 'ad dropped off in the Burrer Road a-'ailin' of a tram,—as is a great improvement on a 'bus, tho' I can't abide the smell of the parryfeen as is jest like Merryker.

As my Joe he wrote me last mouth as there'd

been a pretty 'ow dye do with them blacks as is only jest wot I expected, and who's fault but their own, cos in course if we're all equal, why the colour of your skin don't make no difference, not but I'm werry sure as I'm better than a black 'oman, but not proud as I didn't ought to be, but thankful as I didn't make myself.

Nor yet Mrs. Pollen, for of all the black silks as she's been and turned and made up I never did, as is a downright curiosity as I should like Queen Wictorier to see thro' a-wearin' black silk 'erself, as ain't got the wear in 'em as they did use to 'ave, and would bear turnin' more than once, cos one good turn deserves another, as the sayin' is.

That's why I don't 'old with none of them cotton back things as spots that easy with only a drop of water, as I'm sure the weather as we have 'ad is been enuf to spile every rag of clothes as you puts on, and as to mackintoshes, I'd as soon walk in a coal sack for the 'cat as they throws out.

But in course, as I were a-sayin', any one may talk about pollytics, or any think like that, as ain't private property, cos in course we all pays for 'em, as is our rights, and I 'ave 'eard say is why Queen Wictorier won't never meddle nor make with no acts of Parlymint, as shows 'er sense, thro' well a-knowin' as that's wot Parlymint is for.

As she must trust, for in course she couldn't

go and set in Parlymiut all the time and listen to all that rubbish as is talked, not but wot if she did go, she'd shet up a deal of that jawin', as don't mean nothing but gammon, a-keepin' parties out of their beds, and praps their wives a-settin' up for 'em a-shiverin', thro' a-lettin' the fire out. I never lets Miss Pilkinton, when she were a-stoppin' along with me, set up for me, as always gets that deep in a book, as she don't give a thought about the fire; while a-weepin' over Fatherless Fanny, or the Mistress of Udolpho, or Thaddeus, as were sore thro' his sufferin's, poor feller, as 'ad to ride for 'is life like that there noble captin as 'ave rode all thro' 'Urope, Asher, Afriker, and Merryker, till the sea stopped 'im. But as I were a-sayin', a little playful prattle or 'armless tattlin' can't do no 'arm as may raise a smile even while the 'art's a-bleedin'.

But, law bless me! don't let there be no labellin' parties behind their backs, as might 'ave the law on you,—as I says to Mrs. Padwick, if you wants to 'ave somethin' in the way of a pleasant day while your friends is 'ere, I'll make one any time; partikler over a cup of tea with a srimp throwed in for a relish; not as I cares for a crease, nor yet a reddish, unless jest once in a way with a spring onion, as is werry different to a scallion as nearly takes your breath away, as preaps would be a good thing if it did.

I'm sure I never shan't forget a-bein' nearly stifled in a Bow bus one arternoon, a-settin' in the fur end, with two of the fattest Jew ladies, as must 'ave been 'Ebrer twin sisters, in welwet capes and bugles, the largest size as ever was turned out of Egyp' or 'Ounsditch either, tho' werry perlite and friendly. I were that squoze up in the corner, as ain't a figger as will bear squeezin' in a gen'ral way, when a young feller as set oppersite me, and says, "Next time as you eats 'em afore comin' in a bus, bile 'em, and don't mix 'em up with rum," and up he gets.

I says, "You're a-insultin' young blackguard, addressin' of a lady, and all I've took is wot the doctor 'ave ordered for the spavins."

"All right, old lady," he says; "I'm glad as I'm a-gettin' out."

I says, "So am I."

I must say as there was a garlicky smell, as was somethink as them 'Ebrer ladies 'ad in a basket, as was mixed with srub.

I said when we was startin' for Askit, as that there Mrs. Edwards wasn't quite up to no races, in my opinion, and so I said to 'er 'usban' but he were full of goin', and natrally wished for to take 'er, as is wot I likes to see in a man, not for to go a-pleasurin' 'isself, and leaves 'is wife at 'ome.

Not but wot I've always been a 'ome bird my-

self, as the sayin' is, and told Mrs. Edwards as I didn't want to go; not as ever I dreamed as she'd be a mother afore mornin' broke, as nearly cost 'er 'er life; and 'ad the child cristenen Askit, as don't sound like a reglar Christshun name.

I must say as I relishes my tea, partikler when settin' up; and me and Mrs. Padwick 'ad to nuss that Mrs. Edwards, as really did ought to 'ave been ashamed of 'erself; but we both liked 'er, and he wasn't a bad sort, tho' decided 'orsey in 'is ways. I should enjoy my tea more of a day, only I don't care about it mixed with them pollytics, and 'orse-racin' throwed in, as was Mr. Edwards and Miss Pilkinton, as is gone wild over Gladstin and 'is tros-sities, as is werry disgustin', and don't care myself to 'ear about.

I'm sure there ain't no one more plesed to see a friend drop in to tea, as is a meal as I lingers over; not as I can a-bear anyone to do like Mrs. Welsher, as will always be late when tho pot is drained, and the leaves won't bear another water, and the kittle jest filled up by the gal, afore she went up to clean 'erself; not as ever I cares for a 'eavy meal with tea, as relishes a scrump, and not a baked line of pork and tea cakes, a-swimmin' in butter, as is wot Mrs. Welsher give us, when me and Mrs. Padwick went to see 'er at Enfield, as is

where the rifles comes from, and races reglar every year, about Easter time.

Wherever London is a-goin' to run to, I can't think ; but never in my born days did I see a place so built over as 'Ollerway, and all that part as we passed thro' a-goin' by rail to Enfield.

Them cattle layers as did used to be all about 'Ollerway is done away, and all 'ouses, as far as the foot of 'Ighgate 'Ill.

As to 'Ornsey, if it 'adn't been for the old church, I shouldn't never 'ave guessed where we was, as were all green lanes and fields, when I were growed up.

We went by the Great Northern, as stands where the Old Small Pox 'Ospital did used to be, as were next to the Fever, and runs thro' Old St. Pancris Churchyard, as looks werry disgraceful.

The train were full, tho' not crowded ; but, law, when we got to Enfield, ankle deep is the word for the mud, and the roughs a-crowdin' all about, as begun a-chaffin' me about bein' Roger Tichbung a-escapin' in disguise.

I kep' my temper, else I should 'ave let out agin that bloated beast, as did ought to 'ave been sent for life, if not 'ung.

The place was all riot, as I says made me thankful as I didn't live near where there's none of them wild races.

Mrs. Welsher, she lived down a lanc as was mud by the foot deep, and I shouldn't never 'ave got down it, only but for a mad bull as 'ad got loose, and come a-drivin' down behind me.

So I took to my 'eels, while Mrs. Padwick she rolled into a ditch, and the bull were close on to me, when, as luck would 'ave it, my foot slipped, and down I went, and the bull he took and cleared me with a jump.

It's a mussy as I wasn't killed by the fellers as were arter 'im, for they all come over me, as only mudded me, with jest a broose or two.

As to Mrs. Padwick, she were black mud from 'ead to foot; but we both on us got cleaned down at Mrs. Welsher's, and our clothes was dry by the time as we was goin' 'ome.

We went 'ome early, in course, and if we knowed as them races was on, we shouldn't never 'ave went, as I never wanted to, thro' bein' Easter Monday, as is a reglar 'olliday, as is all werry well for them as can't get out no other time, but I'd rather stop at 'ome, and make room for others.

Leastways, them was my remarks in the train as goin' 'ome, and if a impident young puppy didn't up and say, "If there was many out like you we couldn't get along."

I says, "I treats parties like you with silent con-

tempt, but I tell you wot it is, it don't show no good broughtin's up to be that rude to any one as is your elders over their sizes."

"Leave the old lady alone, do, Jack," says a young gal as was along with 'im, "don't you see as she's moppy, and a reglar upper crust West End swell."

I says, "I ain't nothink of the sort, but only a plain wife and mother, and old enuf to be both to you."

That gal says, "Your plain enuf, goodness knows, and as to bein' a swell, you'd better stop goin' on at that, or you'll blow up."

I says, "My good gal, I'm sorry as you don't know yourself better, as is a pity."

She says, "You ought to know yourself better than begin a-talkin' to my young man."

I says, "Poor child, your young man, he's young enuf, and so are you; but take my advice, and don't be that cheeky to your elders, as is like the Merry-kins, as did ought to be a-warnin' to every body."

Says the young feller, "They're a right down good sort."

"Ah!" I says, "good for nothink, as was worry well as Injins, but don't do for ladies and gentlemen, as any one can tell as goes there and sees 'em."

He says, "I shall be a-goin' soon, now as they're a-takin' to 'orse racin'."

I says, "They only wants that to finish 'em."

Says that young gal, "Jack, why ever do you keep on a-talkin' to that old sack of fat, as isscrewed." He bust out larfin', and if he didn't take and give 'er a kiss right under my nose.

So I turns my 'ead away, and began a-talkin' quiet to Mrs. Padwick, cos really it's dreadful to see the impidence of them young people, as ain't no shame left nowadays.

I were a-sayin' to Brown over supper, when we got 'ome, as it were downright orful to see the way as gals and boys goes on nowadays, that forard.

"Oh!" he says, "that's Merrykin."

I says, "It's enuf to make one wish as they 'adn't never been discovered, to see 'ow they've turned out since they was independent. No wonder they've had a grand Exhibition over there, to show their brotherly love."

I knowed I were touchin' Brown on a tinder pint, for he wanted to go to see 'ow they was a-gettin' on with their steam-injins, but I says I'd rather see 'ow they've got on with theirselves. Cos no doubt they must be proud of the war as they 'ad to put down slavery, and no doubt they're proud of their Government, as never ain't cort pickin' nor stealin'.

But above all, they must be proud to show their brotherly love, as they all feels for one another, as

only wants the chance to be a-cuttin' one another's throats agin over them niggers, as some won't 'ave for feller creeturs, nor allow as 'as equal rights.

They must be proud of the way as they've treated them Injins, jest like brothers, never doin' em no 'arm; and purtectin' em, and never doin' 'em out of their lands when in licker, as they taught 'em to drink, and then pickin' a quarrel with 'em and killin' 'em.

I know as you'll say as it's been the same game all the world over, but then parties didn't never say as all men was born equal, as is a downright falsehood, as they was a-repeatin' t'other day at their Centary dinner.

Cos it's not so many years ago as they was a-callin' out about the South a-treatin' their niggers jest like slaves; as is jest wot they would agin, only they're afraid on 'em, and wouldn't 'ave no mercy on them, as they're tryin' to get to knock under, and would reglar stamp out even them red Injins, as there a-killin' and a-murderin' arter 'avin robbed 'em of their lands.

"Ah!" says Brown, "'old on there, old gal, for we're all pretty well tarred with the same brush."

"Ah!" I says, "that's true, I must say, and the only difference is, as we don't putend to say as all men is equal, but speaks out plain."

"Yes," says Brown, "and we says to them as is

weak, you've got somethink as we wants, and we means to 'ave it, so you'd best give it up quiet, and then preaps we shan't strip you all at once, and leave you to perish; and as to them Injins, they're a wild savidge lot."

"Well," I says, "I don't see as they ain't a-right to the place, they were there fust, and I don't see neither why they're bigger thieves and wus men cos they're red, and wears feathers and beads, as believes in their Great Sperrit, and don't ridicule all religion, and set all laws at defiance, while a-purtendin' to be the most enlightened people on earth.'"

They invades the Injins to rob 'im of 'is grounds, and he kill them as is jest wot we should do by Rooshins or Prooshins or any one else as come along here with the same game, and serve 'em right too. As to bein' equal in course the 'Merrykins all are; there ain't no poor and rich, none as commands others, but every one does jest as he pleases, cos no one would 'ave the impidence for to dare to order 'is feller-citizens about like negro slaves over there; and if a captain aboard of a ship was to give orders to sailors, any sailor would in course turn round and givc 'im a bit of 'is mind, and say, "Go aloft yourself and reef the topsail, I'm a-goin' to 'ave my tea."

Jest like it was in their war, when them

splendid troops from down East come up with their bran new rifles, and the Gin'ral 'ollers out, "Carry harms!" they knowed as them orders carried harms to them, so they took and throwed them rifles down, and run like mad the first gun as they 'eard; and if them Southerners 'ad only 'ad the money, they'd 'ave licked 'em like sacks all over the place, and serve 'em right a-sayin' as every one is born equal, as is false as well as foolishness when we know one is born to be six feet and another four,—a set of 'umbugs!

"Brown," he says to me, "I do believe, Martha, as if you'd your way we should 'ave a 'Merrykin war."

I says, "Certingly not, Brown, no wars for me; but I do 'ate the 'umbug as parties talks about 'Merryker bein' this and that when, if you'd 'ave took away the Irish and the Germins from them Northeners, there wouldn't 'ave been no sojers nor sailors among 'em, nor yet can't expect nothink worth 'avin' from people as does nothink but jaw and chaw all over the place; but, there, let 'em be, they'll bust theirselves with their braggin' some fine day, and the Rooshins will come and punch their 'eads for 'em, and teach 'em 'ow to be'ave to their betters as is wot they all wants to learn from the youngest to the oldest, as is rebels from the cradle; and then 'as the impidence to talk about edication.

Why, they don't know 'ow to begin to teach a child 'is dooty."

I quite trembles to think what our Joe's family is likely to turn out, only I do 'ope as he ain't forgot that good old rule about teachin' on 'em to fear 'im and the broomstick, if they begins to go rong.

It give me a 'orful turn when I was over there to see a boy about eleven or so a-drinkin' a deal too much one New Year's Day, and I says to 'im, "It's my opinion, young feller, as your father wouldn't let you go on a-swillin' at wine like that."

So he ups and says, "Oh! dry up, old woman, about my father. I should like to see that darned old flat-head interfere with my drink."

A set of fools as was in the room did burst out a-larfin', and took and told the father when he come in wot that boy 'ad been and said, and if he didn't take and larf too, and say, "Oh! our Sam is that smart, there ain't no old Britisher as 'll best 'im."

I says, "He'll wust you some day, and preaps bite your ear off at the gallus for not 'avin' taught 'im better."

"Ah!" he says, "that's one of your Old World prejerdices, as is esploded amongst us."

"Yes," I thinks to myself, "the gallus is the fust thing as a lot of thieves would be sure to put down."

But, as Brown were a-sayin', its sich 'umbug in us a-supportin' them Turks as we 'ave done and then take and talk about puttin' down slavery and the slave trade, as them Turks is wuss than any one else at a-carryin' off Christshun gals for to be slaves, —not as they're as bad as them wile Christshuns as will sell their children to them Turks. "Ah!" I says, "them Turks is all bad together, and so's the Christshuns."

"Yes," says Brown; "the lot wants reglar routin' out, like a old drain, as 'ave been stopped up for years."

"Ah!" I says, "the same as there was under Mrs. Pelsher's parlours, as give way with 'er tea-table, thro' the floor a-sinkin' in, with 'er and 'er friends, as proved to be a old cesspool, as they was a-settin' over, as ain't a pleasant thing for to sink into, tho' no great depth, and as dry as a bone, as the sayin' is, and full of rats' nests, as 'ad brought up 'er family there, as was all growed up, and out in the world—no doubt took to their 'eels when they 'eard the tea-table a-comin' down on 'em over their 'eads, as is useful creeturs, jest the same as blue-bottles, only you don't want too many on 'em at a time."

But as I were a-sayin' wot must a battle be, when you thinks wot a noosance races is, as is wuss than a review, as reglar blocked the way all about

the Park one Saturday, and only wolunteers, and kep' Mrs. Belcher and me a settin' in a cab over a 'our, in Park Lane, and 'er, poor soul, all in a fidgit to get to 'er dorter, as lives in Lower Sloane Street, as 'ad sent for 'er all in a 'urry, as come and asked me to go along with 'er, thro' a-feelin' nervous, tho' the mother of seven 'erself. So I says to 'er, "If you're that chicken-'arted, you'd better stop at 'ome," as proved a false alarm altogether, for when the little boy were born three weeks arter, Childer's, as was the 'usban's name, never let 'is wife's mother know a word about it, till it was all over, as showed 'is sense, in my opinion, tho' Mrs. Belcher never spoke to 'im agin, and wows as she never will, to 'er dyin' day.

"Ah!" I says to 'er, "and then it may be too late." Cos I've knowed parties as would give the world to say a-somethink when they was dyin', and not able to.

But as I said afore, in my opinion that review were a noosance, for London is too big to 'ave any shows like that, nor yet the naybour'ood. As is no doubt the reason as Queen Wictorier don't incourage 'em; for it's downright orful to see the crowds, and it's a wonder as thousands ain't squoze to death; for I'm sure the day as Queen Wictorier went to the London 'Ospital, as near cooked my goose as a toucher, at the sayin' is.

Not as I went to see 'er, bless 'er royal 'art, cos now as I lives at the West End, and close agin the Great Western, in course I can see 'er any time.

But me and Mrs. Padwick agreed as we'd go on the quiet that day, and see 'er married niece, as lives in Great Prescott Street, a-thinkin' as Tems Street and Tower 'Ill would be quite quiet, and so the best way along the Minnyres. We got all right to London Bridge, and tho' crowded, Tems Street were passable; but when we got near Tower 'Ill we was reglar mobbed, and drove like cattle, as the perlice reglar charged us, so we 'ad to run for it, and I come sich a buster agin some ion rails, as must 'ave been my death, if they 'adn't give way afore me, and down I went into a airey, where they was pickin' old beddin' to bits, as in course was soft to fall on, but was werry nigh suffercated, thro' 'avin' five or six a-top of me, as I shouldn't 'ave minded so much thro' not bein' their faults, but wot did put me out were the old Jew as owned them premises a-layin' into me with a thick stick, as he were a-beatin' of 'is wool and 'orse 'air with, and tellin' me to get up.

I didn't want no tellin', for glad I was for to scramble up agin over them mattrisses into the street, and did not pity that old Jew, when some of them as he'd been a-'ittin' about, took and turned on 'im, and kicked and beat 'im frightful, and stuffed

a lot of 'is own wool into 'is mouth, as'll teach 'im as he can't do as he likes in 'is own airey, as in course we didn't take and fall into for the purpose, nor yet no pleasure, but was forced in by the rush.

I was dredful shook, and felt it for days, with a broose on the nape of my neck, as showed above my collar, as were quite a eye-sore, only didn't turn more than blue and yaller, as it's a mussy it wasn't my eye.

I nearly lost the sight on it last month, thro' turnin' the corner of our street, with one of those cats as boys plays with on the pavement, as 'ad two sharp pints, a-flyin' up in my face, as I took and cort with my umbrella like a shettle cock, as I sent a-flyin' in at old Sinful's winder, as he were a-settin' at a-readin', and took 'im sharp across the bridge of the nose, as shivered 'is specs' to atoms, and blacked both 'is eyes.

He wouldn't never 'ave knowed as I 'ad any 'and in it, but for a wiper in the 'uman form, that Miss Beltin, proved to be a-settin' at work at 'er fust floor, exactly oppersite me, thro' 'avin' 'er 'ands full of work in the stay makin' line, as was nothink but nasty spite, for she see the 'ole affair, and must 'ave knowed as it wasn't no fault of mine, but only self-defence, as made me 'it the cat, cos self-preservation is natur's fust law, as the sayin' is, agin anythink pinte a-flyin' in your face.

Then for that fieldmale to go and say as it was

me as begun a-larkin' with that boy, jest to get a chance of sendin' it in at Old Sinful's winder, as if I should let myself down to go a-larkin' with boys and their cats about the streets. Talk of war 'twixt Turks and Christshuns, they ain't nothink to the spite as Old Sinful did used to show agin me, and as to 'is langwidge, why, it would disgrace a dustman ; as I 'ave 'eard say is sometimes quite the swell out of business, as don't in gen'ral wear them fantails, nor yet ring the bell nowadays.

I wish they would, for I'm sure the trouble it is to get Mrs. Padwick's dust took away within' the fortnight nobody wouldn't believe, as there wouldnt be no livin' in the 'ouse, for if she didn't keep a sharp look out not to 'ave no lobster shells nor nothink like that throwed in.

I 'ave 'eard say as there's many dustmen as is reg'lar littery charicters, and 'ave rote lovely lines for their Xmas boxes.

I well remember my dear mother a-sheddin' tears over the Lamp-lighter's Petition, as 'ad 'is 'ip put out, poor feller, near Wellclose Square, thro' a-pitchin' into a open carridge full of Jews, as the wheel on ketched the bottom of 'is ladder when trimmin' of 'is lamp, and pitched 'im 'ead fust into the carridge with a can full of train ile, as was afore gas comc in, as drenched the 'ole lot, as 'ad to turn back, and wouldn't give the poor man a farthin'

a-sayin' as he'd been and spilte all their clothes, as was a-goin' to a weddin', as Jews make a grand fuss over, and is always wonderful smart.

But train ile is dreadful over you, the same as oor Mrs. Coin, as went to a grand fate when old King William opened London Bridge, as a lumination star, all train ilc, dripped down 'er back, as didn't 'urt 'er thro' the ile bein' cold, but spilte 'er yaller sattin turk as she wore, and made 'er smell that orful, as nobody couldn't bear 'er near 'em.

So 'ome she went, poor soul, a-sobbin' of 'er 'art out, a-leavin' Coin behind, as she were frightful jealous on, thro' bein' given to 'is larks, not as he meant no 'arm in sayin' as Rachel Jacobs should be 'is second; but Mrs. Coin, tho' she was 'er own annt, never wouldn't 'ave 'er inside the 'ouse agin, as caused a nasty feelin' in the family, till Rachel married young Solimins, as were in the fruit line, as brought 'em together at the weddin'.

So in course they didn't dare quarrel there under the 'ead Rabbit's werry nose, as wouldn't 'ave stood their givin' of theirselves no hairs in 'is presence, as is jest the same as a bishop as I knows, thro' 'avin' been at the Sinnigog myself, as is lovely orgin playin' of a Friday evenin', as gives the ladies all a gallery to theirselves, as was dressed lovely, I must say; but as to Melia Anscum's cousin a-turmin' Jew to marry one as were of the Portygeeperswashun,

I don't consider as that were a Christshun act, as he could respect 'er for.

As I were a-sayin', Mrs. Belcher she come in that same evenin' quite late, sayin' as she'd been a-'earin of a sermon all about the battle of Harmy-gaddin, as the minister said were eminent, and might break out any time, as would go on till the end of the world.

"Well then," I says, "that's 'ow it's to be, cos they're only be two left at last to fight, so in course when the one 'ad been and killed the other, he'd take and blow 'is own brains out and there'd be a end of everybody."

I says, "I don't expect to live to see that, and if we 'adn't moved and old Sinful and me was left last, tho' I should never let myself down to fight with him over the wall, I'd give 'im my mind to my last breath about 'is be'avour over that log of wood, as I give the dustman to cut up for me, as left it next door the 'rong 'ouse, as was old Sinful's, he took and stuck to it as I could see the butt end on it a-burnin' in 'is back parlour from the end of our gardin, as I knowed by the colour, with only gettin' up two steps of a short ladder.

That old feller he cort me, and come out a-callin' me Peepin' Tom, and Poll Pry in petticoats, as aint langwidge to use to a lady in her own premises, as is the reason as I'm glad as we've been and moved

away from sich a naybour, for I never couldn't 'ave loved that man like myself, not if he'd been my naybour to the end of the world, tho' I don't want to bear no mallis nor 'atred in my 'art.

As to 'im a-darin' to say as he cort me a-pickin' is elderberries as growed on our side the palin's, why, the lawyer told me they was mine by law, as adn't no right for to come a-trespassin' on our premises.

As to stealin' elderberries, why, I wouldn't take the trouble to stoop to it, for I'm sure it's not a wine-glass as I'd take all the ole winter, as is 'eady stuff, like all them 'ome-made wines as is bilious things in gen'ral.

But as I says to Mrs. Belcher, "I certingly 'ave a 'orror of war, and as to a harmy gaddin', while it's always bad to 'ave sojers all let loose over the place as is their ways like 'Amsted 'Eath, when the militier is out, not but wot they're useful in the time of war, jest as the wolunteers would be."

"Ah!" says Mrs. Belcher, "but wot frightens me is to think as our fleet won't be no good now."

"Wot," I says, "are they a-goin' to put down them woodin walls as 'ave been old England's glory."

"No," says she, "but they won't be no use now as they're a-goin' to 'ave this ero tunuel under the sea as will send us into France; as," she says,

"they're a-goin' to purtect by puttin' two of them Woolwich Infants at the mouth on, to keep the French back."

"Wotever use can infants be," says I, "escept to give the alarm with their screams, as might only be pain, and not a way to employ a infant in arms, I should say, a-speakin' as a mother; and don't believe as Queen Wictorier will ever allow it even if they are 'orfins out of the workus, as is flesh and blood for all that."

"Oh!" she says, "I means their large guns as they calls infants for fun."

"Ah!" I says, "I don't old with larkin' with guns, as is werry like playin' with edge tools, as the sayin' is; and tho' I 'ave 'eard tell of a son of a gun, I never 'eard of a gun bein' called a infant, tho' in course we all knows as sojers is called infantry; but supposes as that is the name for them raw recruits, as they keeps constant under fire in the 'eat of battle, so as they may be properly cooked."

"Yes," says, Mrs. Belcher, "and that's why the Queen took and ordered the Prince of Wales to inspect them wolunteers, to see if they was ready, and jest to get 'is 'and in, and see somethink wot a battle's like."

"So as," I says, "not to be took and non-plushed, as the sayin' is; like one of the footmen at Lady Wittles' as took and 'listed thro' bein' in

licker without no more notion of bein' a sojer than a infant, when he went out in the mornin' for 'is 'olliday.

"It cost five pounds for to buy 'im off thro' 'avin' took the Queen's shillin', as he treated the sarjent with to drink the 'ealth of the Prince of Wales as were born that werry same week on a Lord Mare's day, as were the year afore I married myself, as makes esactly two years' difference twist our Joe and the Prince of Wales, tho' born in different months, cos Joe's birthday's in August, and nice weather it were for a long walk, and Brown 'ave told me as he thought as mother would 'ave died of the 'eat a-comin' from Peckham Rye, and couldn't get the 'bus till Camberwell Gate, as was a long journey to Shadwell, tho' the Blackwall Railway brought you quite close, as our 'ouse was only a stone's throw from."

As were proved thro' the young Billerses as lived next door, bein' sent to prison for a week for throwin' stoncs at the trains, from the top of the 'ouse, as is 'ow Mrs. Malchin lost'er last front tooth, poor soul, as she always fancied must 'ave been a catapult, thro' a-comin' with that force as you wouldn't think as the 'uman arm would 'ave the strength.

Not but wot some boys 'as muscles equal to any man, and double their impidence.

Not as 'listin' is anythink like a press-gang a-carryin' you off, like poor Mrs. Milemay, as 'er 'usban' went out for the supper beer, and never come back for thirty year, as went all thro' them 'Merrykin wars, and was paid off the year I was born, with only one leg and a arm left, and a black patch over 'is eye.

My dear mother never would believe the story 'erself, about 'is bein' pressed, cos he never come back to 'is wife, till 'is father-in-law were dead, as left 'er a good bit of property, and then never fancied 'is own son, as were born months and months arter he were carried off, cos the money were left to 'im arter is mother's death, a-passin' over 'is father.

He certingly were cort in 'is own trap, if it were all gammon about the prcss-gang a-takin' on 'im, cos he lost the money thro' it, and some say as he'd been a-livin' with a wife and family at Turn'am Green, all the time, as wasn't easy to get at in them days, afore busses come in and railways wasn't inwented. And wot looked bad was when he did get 'ome, arter all them years, he be'aved that orful bad, as 'is son's wife wouldn't 'ave 'im in the 'ouse arter the fust week.

So they agreed to allow 'im seven shillin's a-week, as was paid thro' a lawyer, if he'd promise never to come near 'em agin, and they never cared to ask

where he went to, and 'eard as he were run over by a donkey-cart on Kew Bridge, as injured 'im internal, and died in the Richmond Workus, unbeknown to anyone, as 'is widder never even put on weeds for 'im, nor yet 'is son even a bit of black, as I considers is carryin' bad feelin's too far.

"But, in course, wars is wars, and couldn't get on without sojers and sailors, as is noble fellers, no doubt; and I ain't one of them as turns up my nose at volunteers, as looks that noble of a Saturday, a-marchin' by our door, a-goin' to 'Igh Park, and I'm sure would fight for Queen and country, agin Rooshins and Prooshins too."

"Ah!" says Mrs. Belcher, "that's where it is; both them Rooshins and Prooshins is that artful cos they knows werry well wot beggars we should be to fight, so they comes the carney over Queen Wictorier, and marries into 'er family; so, in course, she can't go to war agin 'er own childrin's childriu, as we must be a-lookin' for now, as 'er gran'dorter is a-goin' to be married."

"Ah!" I says, "'ow time do fly; but wot I'm afeard on is that there Duchess of Edinburrer 'avin been and sloped on the quiet back to Roosher, as looks as if they was a-gettin' of 'er 'ome in case of war; and, in course, they may keep'er there if they likes, as long as she's 'appy; and as to 'im, ho must go where 'is wife is, and cau always come 'ome on

the quiet, and see 'is Royal ma, cos, in course, if there was war, we shouldn't be that mean as to say as Queen Wictorier must be not at 'ome to 'er own son, cos of 'is father-in-law."

Says Mrs. Belcher, "That's why them two Hemprors is that owdashus, cos they knows werry well as Queen Wictorier would give strict orders as they wasn't to be killed on no account in battle, thro' beiu' relations, and if took pris'ners, they'd live in prison like fightin' cocks, without 'ard labour, nor 'avin' of their 'air cut, and preshus soon get their tickets, tho', in course, bound over to keep the peace."

I says, "Law, wot's the use of that; they always makes peace arter war, tho' it's only jest to make war agin, as some says is good for to thin the poppylation, as is all werry fine talkin' till it comes 'ome to 'em."

"Cos," I says, "it's werry easy to talk, and take other people's troubles coolly, but let anyone 'ave a 'usban', or a child, or a brother killed in battle, or come 'ome without their arms and legs, with a penshun of a shillin' a day for to live upon, and then see if they'll think war a fine thing; let alone the taxes as will be doubled over everythink, as they was when my dear mother married, when bread were 'arf-a-crown a loaf, and winders and 'air powder both taxed, as is why they was both throwed

up, leastways, parties blocked up their winders, and wore their own 'air."

I must say as powder do look well on a footman, with a good leg and a 'ansome livery; and knowed a old gentleman once as were powdered every mornin', and looked noble, with 'is 'ead like a collyflower.

He were one as well remembered the Queen of France, as always wore powder, till they cut off 'er 'ead out of spite, cos she was that 'ansome. But all as I've got too say is as I'm sure that Queen Wictorier will never go to war if she can 'elp it, thro' 'avin' two sons in the harmy, as, in course, she'd glory in seein' both on 'em 'eadin' of 'er royal troops, but don't want to 'ave a widder and five children throwed on 'er 'ands, poor soul, as would break 'er down; and if either on 'em was even brought down to a wooden leg, or a 'ook for a 'arm, would be a terrible eye-sore in the family.

So in course we've got 'er on our side; and wot I says is, let them Rooshins kill them Turks, and then let the Prooshins pitch into the Rooshins for doin' it, and let them both fight till the Prooshins is werry nigh done for, and then the French can come in and finish them off, and then when they've done it, they'll 'ave another riverlution, as they'll kill themselves in by the thousans, and then we shall 'ave peace, and no occasion for us to interfere.

Not as ever I'll believe as Queen Wictorier will stand by and not see fair play, as is a jewel, as the sayin' is, and if them Rooshins or Prooshins carries their bullyin' ways too far, she'll up and speak out, as one word from 'er and every volunteer would take and carry arms all over the place, as would be a fine sight for to see 'er at the ead of 'er army a-marchin' to wictory, with all 'er royal family round 'er, as 'er werry name makes tyrants to tremble, as is why Old Sinful wouldn't go to see 'er a-wisit in the London 'Ospital, for if ever there was a born tyrant it's 'im, and a bully too.

Mrs. Belcher, she's one of them as is always that anxious about the poor bein' improved, and were a-sayin' one evenin' over tea as she knowed a lady as 'ad a immense fortune, at the West End, as give it away like water, and 'ad lots of wisitors as went about among the poor and inwited them to come to meetin's, when they'd done work, as was sometimes past midnight.

So Brown, as was a-listenin', says, "And don't that same good lady do nothink for the rich?"

"Oh!" says Mrs. Belcher, "they all knows their duties."

"Yes," says Brown, "and nicely they keeps to 'em." He says, "In course, lords and ladies never runs away with other people's wives. You never 'ears of them in the Diworce Courts, and then 'ow

they brings up their families, as never disgraces theirselves, and don't idle all their time away, and only goes to a club like a workin' man does to a cook-shop or a public for their meals, when the family's out of town."

"They never spends their time and money in tryin, to ruin others. Oh! dear no."

"Well," I says, "I don't see as poor people shouldn't be set right cos rich ones goes rong."

"No!" says Brown, "but if rich people was to look a little more at 'ome, preaps there wouldn't be so many bad among the poor. Cos it's all werry fine a-talkin' about the poor, but rich and poor both does 'rong jest to please themselves, and don't care who suffers. Cos I should like to know 'ow many is there as is in the 'ulks thro' bein' poor, and there's a-many as 'ave come to the gallus all thro' bein' deserted in infancy by their fathers, as left them to be born and brought up in a workus, where they 'eard nothink but wot's bad from old wretches as they're throwed with, and took to church with nothink but the fear of the beadle's cane afore their eyes."

"Well," I says, "it seems to me as about morals with rich and poor, it's six of one and 'arf-a-dozen of t'other, as the sayin' is."

"No doubt that's true," says Brown, "but to 'ear people talk, and see 'ow they acts about the

poor, you'd think as rich people was all angels, and poor ones quite the other sort. Cos it's jest the same thing, whether a man as 'ave got fifteen shillin's a-week takes and squanders it in tossin' for drink, and a man as 'ave 'is thousands and spends more than he can afford in 'orse-racin' and bettin', let alone eatin' and drinkin' and other wices, and if the rich would set a better esample, and be 'ave like lords and ladies did ought to, then the poor would look up to 'em and respect 'em, as is quite different to wot is a-goin' on."

Says Mrs. Belcher, "Oh! Mr. Brown, you're a downright socialist."

"No," says he, "nor never was nor never will be. I wants every one, both poor and rich, to respect others, and then he'll be respected 'imself. As them as is rich did not ought to be so greedy after every penny, cos wot's the reason of the 'ard work as men is obliged to do, as is some on 'em at it seven days a week for sixteen 'ours a day, why, it's all them employers as is that covetous."

"Ah," I says, "and well you may say so, when you looks at them bus men alone, as some starts at eight in the mornin', and never gets 'ome till past twelve at night, as is downright shameful 'ours to 'ave to work, esposed to weather as they are, and no time for a meal, and, in my opinion, it would be better if some of them rich parties, as talks agin

slavery and wice, would think about a man as works all them 'ours, without no time to think about 'is body, let alone 'is soul, as he don't 'ardly know as he's got sich a thing."

Says Mrs. Belcher, "Them bus men gets fust-rate wages."

"Yes," I says, "they pays 'em well, I've 'eard, but it would be better to 'ave more on 'em if they was paid less, cos sixteen 'ours a-day it's killin' work, as drives many a sober man to drinkin'."

"Ah!" says Brown, "I'm sure I should drink myself, wot with the cold in winter, and the 'eat in summer."

"Yes," I says; "let alone a easterly wind a-cuttin' you in 'arf, as nothink won't keep out, as in gen'ral ends in bronkitters, as 'ave brought a many to their graves; tho' if they don't 'ave that, they 'ave somethink else to kill 'em, so it's all the same thing in the hend."

Mrs. Belcher she begun about it bein' a sin for busses to run of a Sunday, as made Brown take 'er up uncommon short, a-tellin' 'er as she didn't ought ride in 'em, and, says he, "It ain't the busses a-runnin' as is rong, but workin' of the men 'arder than the 'orses, cos they gives the animals a day's rest, and more than that in the week; but the men is always at work, so did ought to 'ave more men on for the work, and that's the way to cure it."

I says, "I'm sure they're that 'ard-worked, as it's a wonder as they don't strike, like the cabs 'ave done."

"Ah!" says Brown, "no doubt they would, only but for 'avin' no time to meet, nor settle nothink."

"Ah!" says I, "I don't 'old with them strikes; but why don't them bus men get someone to put all their complaints in the papers, and see if some of these 'ere anti-slavery parties won't do nothink for 'em."

Says Brown, "Catch 'em; they've got to be them woolly-'eaded blacks afore them ladies and gentlemen will take 'em up; but," says he, "if a war was to come, it would make labour more valuable."

"Yes," I says; "but a nice mess we should be in, if all the bus men was to take and list, as all the cabmen would be sure to foller, and then all the railway stokers, and everybody would 'ave to walk, as they did used to in my dear mother's time, as I remembers well when a gal, as a shillin' lift in a 'ackney coach were a reglar blessin', and only took you a mile; but then London were not the size as it is now, and nobody never went from Mile End Gate to Shep'erd's Bush and back in a day, and only sixpence."

For there was my own mother's aunt, as lived

at Stratford, never see my mother nor none of 'er relations, as lived at Chelsea, for over eleven years, and wouldn't 'ave see 'em then but for busses a-beginnin' to run, and 'er a-comin' into a little property, and was able to do the 'ole journey for eighteenpence, as was thought wonderful cheap; but now you can do it for sixpence all the way, as is the money saved in shoe leather, let alone your corns, as is that tender in 'ot weather, as to make walkin' a downright misery, as cuttin' don't cure, as is 'ow Old Petter got lockjaw, a old fool to use a razor, as was a reglar old miser, and they do say as it wasn't 'is corns as he cut, but put 'isself out of the world in a rage, at bein' bested by them Turks, as got all 'is money, as he only lent 'em cos he got more interest for it.

But then it's all the same all over thö world. Turkey or no Turkey, people is that greedy over money, jest the same as some is over wittles and drink, as there's a-many as only gets drunk thro' greediness, for they don't want it. I do wish as they'd take and lock parties up as gets drunk and neglects their families, a-keepin' 'em 'ard at work, and makin' 'em pay to keep their children; but, law, there's some as never will keep straight, not if you give them everythink in this world, and some says, "Oh! let 'em get married young, and they'll turn steady," as is all my eye; for I'm sure I've

knowed many a decent respectable servint gal, as took that pride in 'erself when single, as 'ave turned out a nasty, dirty, idle, gossipin' creetur, as a wife, and been the ruin of a decent workin' mau.

Not but wot, as a 'gen'ral rule, it's the man's fault; cos if he kep' steady, and come 'ome reglar, he'd find as 'is wife would keep straight, to 'ave 'is meals ready for 'im, and, in course, parties did ought to look afore they leaps, and not take and marry the fust as comes along.

Not but wot parties may be too partikler, as is wot Miss Pilkinton always will 'ave she 'ave been, as 'ave kep' 'er single, as talks about 'avin' offers by the score; but I never see anyoue make up to 'er, as she didn't try to 'ook fust, and nice beauties they've been.

I'm sure sho's 'ad as many narrer escapes as a fireman; for the fellers as 'ave made up to 'er a-smellin' as there was a bit of money a-'angin' to 'er was that willin's as would 'ave 'ad 'er money and 'er life too within a year, and arter all only twenty-six pounds a year, as is in the stocks, where her mother and grandmother was afore 'er thro' 'er grandfather bein' in the ile-shop line close agin the back of St. Martin's Church.

I can jest remember it wheu I were quite a child with a churchyard round it, as was all carted away up to Camdin Town, as broke many a 'art as,

couldn't a-bear not 'avin' their families left quiet in their graves as was all disturbed to make them new streets as runs into the Strand, close agin Cherrin' Cross, as is where the King's Muse did used to be, as were pulled down for to make room for the skelintin of the gigantic wale as is now Trafalgar Square, as have been throwed open to the river thro' a-pullin' down Northumberlan 'ouse for to make a thoroughfare, as some says is the finest sight in Europe.

I must say as I misses the old 'ouse with the lion as did used to stand over the gate with 'is tail as seemed to wag like life as was King Charles' last words to that old murderin' willin, Oliver Crumblewell on the scaffoldin', with his eyes bound up so as not to see the axe, but kep on a-askin', "Does he wag 'is tail?"

Some one said, "Yes," jest to pacify 'im.

Then says he, "I'm a dead man!" and so he was, for Crumblewell took and whipped 'is 'ead off in a jiffey without askin' 'im, as 'ave come 'ome to the willin, for 'is own 'ead ain't never been let rest in 'is grave, and 'ave been that tossed about as it's got that mixed up with them other 'eads of traitors as there's no tellin' which is which.

Brown he always will 'ave it as King Charles weren't no great shakes 'isself, and never spoke the truth.

“So,” I says, “that may be, but if every one as tells lies was to ‘ave their ‘eads chopped off, there wouldn’t be blocks enuf in the world to lay ‘em on, nor yet choppers to do it; besides, lyin’ ain’t so bad as murderin’, all said and done; and I don’t believe as slittin’ any one’s tongue would cure ‘em of lyin’, tho’ certingly cuttin’ of the ‘ead off would be a settler for all their wices.”

But, bless my ‘art, ‘ow Cherrin Cross is changed to be sure, with all the railin’s agin King Charles done away with, as they did used to dress up with oak apples on the day as he come back to the throne, as was in May, not as they could put ‘is ‘ead on, poor feller, tho’ they did set ‘im up on a ‘orse agin, as is a noble statue, partikler the ‘orse, as ain’t got no girths under ‘im.

Then King Charles he were every inch a King when on ‘orseback, cos he knowed ‘ow to set a ‘orse the same as King George as ain’t got no sterrips, and is ridin’ in ‘is slippers close agin St. Martin’s church, as is where my grandmother were married, leastways so was my aunt, as were ‘er own dorter.

Ah, and there was a match, for a willin as had been a jockey transported for ‘orse stealin’, to come and take a respectable young woman out of a good place, as were ‘ousemaid to a bishop in St. James’ Square, as wore purple, and lawn sleeves, and lived like a fightin’ cock, as the sayin’ is, and then to

find out as he were a conwic ; but, as I've 'eard my dear mother say, wot could she expect as was took with 'is 'andsome face, as follered 'er into St. James' church, and never looked into 'is 'at nor at 'is book once all the service, and fell asleep while a bishop were a-preachin' in 'is full bottom wig, as they was obligated to wear in those days cos King George would 'ave it, thro' bein' head of the Church, so wouldn't have no other wisible 'ead but 'imself.

As to my aunt, marry 'im she would, as returned to 'is bad ways and were 'ung at Tyburn for a bay mare, as he run away with near 'Ounslow ; and she died in Bedlam, as was where Moorfields stands now, afore they took it over the water.

My poor grandfather, he never 'eld up is 'eard agin, and everythink seemed to go rong with 'im as ended 'is days in a arms-'ouse, as he was got into thro' losin' the use of 'is legs, and that's why I'm always that down on them 'asty matches, as 'ave brought more misery than enuf in families. But, as I always thinks marridge ain't the lottery as parties thinks it ; but if a young gal goes and marries a young feller as she meets permiscous, even tho' it might be a place of worship, or a Sunday school, why, that ain't wot I calls a prudent match.

As is 'ow Susan Meltin come for to git married

to young Sloper, as was that steady as you might 'ave trusted 'im anywheres, till he took to bettin', as soon took 'im from 'is 'ome, and a nice mess 'is were. Not but wot there's some good 'uns on the turf, preaps better than a many as is under it, for there was Sam Piper, as did used to ride as a jockey, thro' bein' that weight as no 'orse couldn't feel 'im.

I'm sure I quite love that boy, thro a-suppartin' of 'is mother.

As I see 'im fust a-stayin' down along with Mrs. Piper, as is Padwick's sister, at Newmarket, as is the place where King Charles did used to run races, thro' 'im a-puttin' of 'is 'ip quite out, and laid up in the same 'ouse, but as good a boy as ever trod shoe leather, as the sayin' is, with lords and dukes a-comin' to see 'im, with everythink as he could fancy.

But he only fretted at not bein' able to ride, and would 'ave tried but for Brown, who come down and put the kibosh on it, as the sayin' is.

I were partikler glad as Brown 'ad come, for I was all of a fidget, cos of this ere war as seems to be a-'angin' fire over our 'eads, and might bust on us while we was a-thinkin' of nothink but 'orses.

So I says to Brown, "Do you think as these 'ere Scurvyuns can't come near enuf to us for to fire and 'it us unawares. Cos," I says, "nowadays no one ain't safe any more than Mrs. Pedden, as lived at Plumstead, poor thing, as were werry nigh killed

a-'angin' out in 'er own bit of back gardin, thro' a somethink a-droppin' close to 'er, as were a 'eavy stone bottle, as were marked North Woolwich Gardins. As some thought as it might 'ave fell out of a balloon as 'ad gone up from there that artemnoon ; but were quite out of sight, as made 'er think as it might 'ave come from the moon, but as I told 'er, if it 'ad it would 'ave knocked the earth a one side, thro a-comin' down sich a 'ight, for if a piece of orange peel dropped from off the top of the Monyment will knock any one down in passin', only think wot a stone bottle would do out of the moon.

So Brown, he says, "Don't you know as the earth bein' convex, perwents anything a-goin' too far in a straight line."

"Yes," I says, "but with all these uew inventions they'll take and invent guns as'll shoot round a corner ; and then thiuk of these ere torpedoes or dinermite, as can esplode without no fire ; and pre-aps 'ave blowed up thousans unbeknowu, as 'ave gone to sea with it in their portmantles as samples, thc same as gunpowder tea ; as is why I do 'ope as we shant never 'ave no war with Chinees, as could easy pison our teas, let alone sendin' us nothink but gunpowder, as would soon blow our 'eads off."

"Well," says Brown, "they seems beut on it, and I don't care which side wins, so as we don't get drored in."

“Wot,” I says, “they ain’t never begun a-fightin’ and never asked Queen Wictorier’s leave.” I says, “There’ll be a pretty how-d’ye-do over that.”

“Ah!” says Brown, “we shan’t interfere.”

I says, “Preaps not,” the same as I never interfered with them two females in Clare Market, as was goin’ on anythink; but a elderly party as I were a-passin’, as only said, “’Igh words, ladies, ’igh words don’t get to blows,” and ’adn’t ’ardly got the words out, when they took and flew at each other like two tigers broke loose, and one on ’em give me a blow in the chest, a-sayin’, “Stand clear, old waterbutt, can’t you,” as sent me a-staggerin’ back on to a old man’s foot, as give a yell and a kick out, and away I went over one of them barrers of greens, as was next to a fish stall, and over we all went together.

I never could ’ave believed as I could ’ave lived thro’ wot I got, as was pummelled and smacked that ’ard, as made me roar for mercy agin, and must ’ave been killed but for a Perlice, as come and picked me up, a-thinkin’ me either drunk or dyin’, as wasn’t neither, tho’ bedaubed all over from ’ead to foot with mud and fishes’ insides, and my lip cut agin the curb stone, and took to the Perlice office along with the rest, where, as luck would ’ave it, I see a party as knowed me, or I should have been locked up, and the Magistrate, he says to me, “Mrs. Brown, let me

advise you never to interfere with no street rows agin, as 'ave 'ad your lesson."

So I thanked 'im, and got 'ome in a cah, with my clothes all rihhins, and money to pay hesides, so I don't 'old with interferin', and if I was to see Queen Wictorier, I should say to 'er, "Please, your Majesty let 'em fight it out."

"Ah!" says Brown, "hut we don't want no furrin power to stop our road to Injier."

"Well then, I should say, the best thing as we could do would be to run all oppersition off the road, the same as the busses does, as is 'ow they gets all their own way."

"Ah!" says Brown, "it's easier said than done."

"Well," I says, "let Queen Wictorier give the word, and see if there's any road in this world as wouldn't he kep' clear for 'er, jest like the rail road when she goes to Scotland, as every thing and every hody is shunted; and jest look when she goes to the City or any wheres, 'ow all the crowd is kep' back, and not a hus suffered for to stop, nor nothink but them mail carts; tho' no doubt a fire injin would he, if life and death were a-'angin' to it, as they do say as royal princes 'ave heen seen a-doin' afore now, as is riskin' their lives, no doubt, and not so useful as a reglar fireman arter all, as is used to it, and will go up a ladder all in flames jest as if it

were only a make believe fire, as is a thing I can't abear to see any one a-playin' with, as can't tell wot mightn't 'appen durin' the night.

I do believe a alarm of fire would be my death, and that's why I'm always up last, and never won't let the gal 'ave gas in 'er room, as she might light for to read by, and I takes werry good care as she don't get a chance with candle ends, and never allows 'er a lucifer arter I've seen 'er light out, and no key to 'er bed room door.

So I does my best to be on my guard, and then I can't help wot 'appens, whether fire or water, as might both break loose, like the tank at St. George's 'Ospital; tho' I must say as I'd rather be washed out of my bed than burnt out in it, any day. Cos fire is a dewourin' helephant, as the sayin' is, as nothink can't stand agin.

I'm sure I shan't never forgit poor Nancy Wheeler, as were as pretty a gal as ever I see, and a good gal too, tho' both father and mother bad lotz, both on 'em; for he were a sort of a card-sharpin', idle waggerbone, as would 'ang about pubs, and go to the races, too lazy to play skittles, but would be on to the cards or thimble-riggin'; and as to 'er, she weren't no great shakes, I shouldn't say, at no time, tho' she did used to blow about a-ridin' in 'er own carridge, as might 'ave been a green cart, cos anyone could tell as she weren't

never a born lady, tho' she did used to talk about comin' down in the world.

Any'ow, they was dreadful poor when they lived the back of us, near Stepney Green; and I'm sure I did pity that gal Nancy, when quite a child, without a bit of shoe to 'er foot, and 'ardly a rag on, that bitter winter as we 'ad about twenty year ago, let alone bein' 'arf starved.

I only kep' a bit of a gal that time, as took the measles, as she give two of my children, and I nussed 'er thro' it with 'em, and wasn't no sooner got quite well, than 'er mother come and fetched 'er away, tho' Liza was down with it, and our Sam, as I lost, thro' a-settlin' on 'is chest, were only sickenin'.

Poor little Nancy! she'd 'ad 'em, and come and asked if she could stop along with, and 'elp me, as was only jest turned thirteen 'erself, and 'andy she was.

So when we got straight agin, I told 'er mothor that I'd keep 'er, and she stayed over seven year, and Brown and me treated 'er like our own child.

Brown, he wouldn't 'avo the father inside 'is door; but said as he didn't so much mind the mother a-comin', so long as he wasn't bothered with 'er, so she did used to come back'ard and forwards, and in gen'ral on the cadge.

At last I see as Nancy were a-gettin' unsettled

and uneasy, and 'er mother come, and was always a-talkin' about 'er beauty, and a-sayin' if she was but well-dressed, she'd make a figger in the world.

"Well," I says, "she's dressed jest the same as my own gal, and I'm sure if she could better 'erself, it's a pity as she don't."

That put 'er mother's back up, as the sayin' is, leastway, she pretended to take offence, as I could see were all make believe, and that she were a-tryin' to pick a quarrel.

So I says to 'er, "Mrs. Wheeler, it's no use a-makin' things unpleasint; but," I says, "if you wants the gal, take 'er," and sorry I am as I said it, for she took and bounced out of the place, a-orderin' the gal to come 'ome that werry evenin'.

I spoke werry kind to the poor thing, afore she left my 'ouse, as she did, with everythink tidy and comfortable, and two dresses, as was almost new.

I'm afraid, poor thing, as she weren't quite opin and above board with me, but it were all 'er mother's fault, as was one of the lyingest, double-faced fieldmales as ever lived.

I don't think as it were more than three months arter she left me, that I see 'er in the streets one mornin', that disgraceful figger as she were ashamed to see me, and run up a cort, not to meet me; and then arter that, Brown come and told me as he'd met 'er a-walkin' with a young man, dressed as fine

as a 'orse, and as she 'ad pertended not to see 'im. Then poor Mrs. Challin she come and told me as er mother's 'ouse were a den of wice, as took in odgers of all sects, as some on 'em did used to go to the Methody Chapel of a Sunday evenin', dressed like Duchesscs, and as she'd see poor Nancy a-comin' out in a pale blue silk, and a feather, as ad stopped and spoke to 'er, and asked arter me, and told 'er as I'd been and insulted 'er pa and ma, that gross over their poverty, as 'er pa 'ad give orders as they wasn't never to wisit me no more.

I says to Mrs. Challin, "The next time as she meets you and talks like that, jest you say Mrs. Brown would be glad if 'er ma would send back the money as she's borrered, let alone a umbreller and injy rubber shoes, and a warm shawl."

I didn't mean 'er to say nothink of the sort, but she did, and if that impident waggerbone of a man didn't come and knock at my door, and when it was opened throw in two odd injy rubber shoes, wore into 'oles, a old gingham, with all 'is bones a-comin' thro' 'is skin, and a shawl that filthy as I give to the dustmen, with a pint of beer, to take em all away.

A insultin' waggerbone, to leave a vulgar message at my own door, with our gal, a-sayin' "As next time as I got locked up for gettin' buffy, I'd better send for 'im to bail me out," as were nothink

but downright cheeky spite, because of me a-complainin' to the parish of the noises as there was in his house of a night, as the back premises on joined mine, and the things as were throwed over our palin's, in the way of brokin crockery and all sorts of rubbish, were downright disgraceful.

So I didn't take no notice of dreadful screamin' as I 'eard jest about supper-time one Sunday evenin'. Not as I were a-goin' to 'ave no supper myself, thro' not feelin' disposed, beyond my beer, and only one glass of that, and were a-thinkin' about all manner, at the back parlour winder.

Them screams kep' on so long, and then stopped that sudden as give me quite a turn, a-thinkin' as preaps someone were 'urt, but then all was that still as I says to myself, "That silence sounds awful."

Jest then I see some one in the dusk at the palin's, a-callin' out, "Mrs. Brown!" So I 'urries down to the bottom of the gardin, and there I see a young boy as I knowed were one of the Wheelers, thro' 'im a-callin' insultin' things arter me in the streets.

So I thought as preaps he'd been set on fresh impidence, but he were a-cryin' fit to break 'is 'art, and says, "Oh pray come—Nancy. Oh! Nancy."

I says, "Wot's the matter?"

He says, "She's been and set 'erself a-light."

I didn't 'ear no more, but give a rush at them

palin's, as was that rotten as they give way afore me like tinder, and was into that 'ouse afore I hardly knowed wot I was doin'.

When I got into the parlours there was a sight. Poor Nancy were a-layin' on the floor with a strange man a-supportin' of 'er 'ead on 'is knees.

I says to the boy, "Get a light, my dear," as 'ad follered me ; for it was almost dark.

He says, "We ain't got one."

I says, "Run next door for one."

The young man says to me, "Lay 'old on 'er, mum. I'll get a light." So I steps across to 'im and he put that poor gal in my arms.

I felt as she weren't dead, but when a light were brought, I never did see such a sight. She was a mask of cinders.

I says "Go for a doctor," to the boy as stood there a-cryin'. "Where's your mother?"

He pinto to the back room.

I says, "Run for the doctor, never mind."

The woman as 'ad brought in the light from next door says, "She's as drunk as a sow in the back room, and all the men 'ave run away."

I says, "Wot men?"

"Why," she says, "all the lot that's been a-drinkin' ere all the arternoon."

Jest then in come the doctor, as come and looked at that poor gal, and says she's dead.

I says, "Don't say so."

"Well," he says, "the life ain't quite out on 'er."

Then I says, "Where there's life there's 'opes."

He says, "Can you get 'er to bed?"

I put 'er down on a old rickety sofy, and went into the back room, where there was such a bed, and Mrs. Wheeler on it dead drunk.

I never did see sich a dog 'ole, so I says to the doctor, "Will it do any 'arm to move 'er."

He says, "Get 'er out of this den if it is possible."

I says, "It's only to my 'ouse jest at the back," cos the boy 'ad told me all the other rooms was let in that 'ouse.

So the doctor and me carried that poor thing thro' the gardin into my place, and then we took and got 'er poor burnt rags off 'er, as was burnt into 'er flesh.

He did all as he could with 'roppin' 'er up in cotton wool, and I give 'er drops of brandy, but she didn't take no notice.

The boys 'ands was burnt dreadful, a-tryin' to save 'er, but didn't know 'ow it 'appened, cos he said as she come rushin' out in the passige all flames, and as Jem Cooper come a-runnin' arter 'er and pulled 'er back.

I says, "Who's Jem Cooper?"

"Oh!" says the boy, "a party as said he were join' to marry 'er, and I think as he said as it was 'ather's fusee as done it, as he were a-lightin' 'is pipe with, thro' bein' that drunk as he didn't know wot he was a-doin'."

I says, "Where is your father."

"Oh!" he says, "he went a-staggerin' out jest afore Nancy come out."

I says, "Don't you know where he's gone."

He says, "No, and don't care, an old——"

I says, "Hold your tongue, my boy, he's your father, and don't dare to abuse 'im."

He begun a-cryin' and says, "Mother ain't much better."

By that time one or two naybours ad come in, and one on 'em went round to see arter Mrs. Wheeler, and come back a-sayin' as she were 'erself, and might she come in.

I says, "Certingly," and in a few minnits she were in the room, only part dressed, with 'er 'air all wild, and a shawl over 'er 'ead.

The moment she set eyes on 'er poor gal, she screams out, "It's God's judgments!"

I says, "Don't talk like that; think of 'is mercy."

She begun to scream and 'owl, and rushed out of the place like a wild beast broke loose, as was Irish, thro' 'er mother as 'ad been a decent old body,

and kep' 'em all pretty straight while she lived, and 'adn't been dead over a twelve month.

The noise as that woman 'ad made, seemed to wake that poor dear gal up, for she opened 'er eyes, and tried to speak, but the poor mouth was all dry.

I give 'er a little brandy and water, but she pushed it away.

I says, "Wot do you want, Nancy, my dear?"

She seemed to know my voice, and give a smile, and ketched 'old of my 'and and kissed it. She said, quite in a whisper, "So weak, can't speak." Then she stopped and said "beer."

"Ah!" I says, "she fancies it."

"Let 'er 'ave it," says the doctor, and in less than a minnit or two there was a jug of beer as the doctor 'ad sent for, and filled up a tumbler as he 'anded to me.

I put it to 'er lips, but she did not at first seem to notice. So I took and wetted 'er poor dear lips with it once or twice, and then of a suddin she set up and took the glass in 'er own 'ands, and did jest take some, but not to say drink; then a minnit arter took and clutched at it and took a good pull at it, a-finishin' the glass and making signs for more, as I give 'er, a-knowin' nothiuk in this world could 'urt 'er.

Arter she'd drunk it she sunk back and seemed to doze, and the doctor said as she might sleep, and

as he'd go 'ome and come back afore he went to bed, and the naybours 'ad all gone but Mrs. Clasher, as told me all about the way as them Wheelers 'ad been a-goin' on ever since the old grandmother died, as was downright dreadful to 'ear, and Mrs. Clasher knowed all about it thro' livin' next door to 'em, as were a-goin' to move all thro' 'em.

'Er and me set a-talkin' alone, a-watchin' the poor gal, for that boy 'ad gone off with 'is mother, when all of a sudden sho woke up and says to me quite plain, "Send for 'im."

I says, "For who, my dear?"

She says, "I've been very wicked." I didn't hear no more.

So I says, "My dear, is it your father? I don't know where he is; he's gone out."

She shook 'er 'ead, and then it come over me as preaps she meant the priest, cos she did always go to 'er chapel when she were along with me, as was ways as 'er grandmother brought 'er up in, as was 'er mother's religion too, but the father had drored the mother away from it, and the boy too, thro' a-turnin' all on it into fun.

Mrs. Clasher she said she was sure as she meant the priest, but the poor thing were that low as sho couldn't give no sign, but Mrs. Clasher she said as she'd fetch 'im.

"Why," I says, "its past eleven o'clock; he'll

be in bed and asleep, and I don't suppose as she'd know 'im if he come, you can but try."

I think it was a full arf-our afore Mrs. Clasher come back with the priest, as wasn't in bed, but out along with some poor sick people.

He were a nice mild-spokin old gentleman, and I says to 'im, "I'm afraid, sir, as you can't do'er no good, poor dear." He didn't say nothink, but pinte upwards, and went on 'is knees by that poor gal.

So me and Mrs. Clasher took and left em alone, and jest then Brown come in, as 'ad been to Chigwell, and left our Joe along with 'is grandmother on Brown's side.

He was all right when I told 'im wot 'ad 'appened, and took 'is pipe and set down like a lamb.

I knowed as he wouldn't go to bed, so I give 'im a little gin and water, and made Mrs. Clasher 'ave a bit of cold meat and bread, and a drop of beer, as that poor dear gal wasn't to 'ave no more, tho' I'd sent for it.

I think that priest was with that poor gal a 'our altogetther, and when he come down stairs he spoke werry nice to me a-'oldin' of 'im a light, and says, "I don't think she will see the mornin', and may God bless you for your goodness to 'er."

I couldn't 'elp a-burstin' out a-cryin', and Brown

he come out with tears in 'is eyes, as is a good deal for 'im to show, and says, "Keep up, old lady."

I asked that priest for to step in, as he did for a few minnits, while me and Mrs. Clasher went up stairs. I didn't see no great change in the poor dear, but she looked wonderfully calm, and oh! so white. She give a smile and put up 'er face for me to kiss 'er, as I did, and then she seemed to doze.

So I made Mrs. Clasher go down and finish 'er supper, and wanted 'er to go 'ome, but she wouldn't leave me alone, she said. And it's well as she didn't, for about jest as the day were a-beginnin' to break, poor dear Nancy got werry restless, and then arter a bit quite quiet, and all of a suddin she 'eld out both 'er 'ands, as I were a-goin' to take, but she put away my 'and quite gently, and 'eld out 'ern agin, and all 'er face seemed for to break out in a smile, as she lifted up 'er eyes and give sich a sigh as I knowed meant 'er last, and so it was.

I knocked on the floor gently, and when Browu and Mrs. Clasher come up, they see nothink but a lovely smilin' angel's face, as looked for all the world as tho' Heaven's light were a-shinin' on it.

We laid 'er in the grave along with 'er grandmother, and she looked lovely to the last, and, jest as that priest said, as if the fire 'ad been and burnt away all of this world as was about 'er.

The boy he follered 'er. As for 'er mother, they'd been and took 'er to the lunatic side of the workus. Her father he come a-blusterin' and a-bullyin', a-sayin' as 'is child should be berried with no Popish trumpery; only Brown put down 'is foot, as the sayin' is, that firm as he didn't dare say no more. That chapel-goer as said he looked on 'er as 'is wife, he come and brought a lot of tracks agin Popery; but from wot 'ad come out afore the carryner about 'im, Brown give 'im sich a-talkin' to as he sneaked off with 'is tracks, and I only 'ope as they'll turn 'im out of that chapel, leastways not let 'im teach in that Sabbath-school no more, as wasn't nothink else but a cloke to 'is willanies.

So that's why I always 'as sich a 'orrer of fires, not as they could ever trace 'ow that poor dear gal cort fire, 'cos a young man as was goin' out of the room along with Wheeler, swore as he put 'is foot on the fusee as was thrown down, but I think as it must 'ave been a bit of the fusee as fell off on to 'er dress, as was only a bit of a rag of a muslin, so in course there weren't nothink to resist the flames, poor dear gal, as the flesh were burnt off 'er.

It give me and Brown both on us a fearful shock, but we didn't never 'ear no more of the Wheelers, escept the boy, as some good people got into a school, as 'is brute of a father went and kicked

up a row at the door on, a-demandin' of 'is child; but they 'ad 'im np afore a magistrut, as decided agin 'im. And as to 'is wife, I never 'eard whether she got ont of the workus alive or not, and I didn't care, for she was a wile wretch as I never wants to 'ear the name on agin, and 'opes as I never shall, tho' fully expects as she'll come to beg 'er bread from door to door, as the sayin' is, and serve 'er right, I say.

Bnt law, talkin' of firin', I'm sure them sojers in the park of a mornin' is that tremenjous, as it pretty nigh frightened me to death; for I was a-stoppin' along with Mrs. Padwick, for the drains at our place was pison, and she'd got her second floor front vacant, so Brown and me took it for a fortnight, for tho' Mrs. Padwick is well before the world, yet Brown says to me, "We can well afford to pay, so let ns do it."

Not as we paid altogether for our board, but Brown he'd bring a bit of fish 'ome with 'im, and frequent poultry, let alone a small chest of tea, as we 'arved with 'or, thro' Brown a-gettin' of it 'olesale, thro' a friend as were a tea-taster.

Brown he were away ncarly the week, and como 'ome that werry evenin' as the papers was full of the Scurvyuns and the Bulgaryuns, and them Turks with their proterculs. Brown says as he thought as preaps as Roosher would bc a-comin' the artful,

but meant to give Turkey a nasty one, and then, he says, no doubt we should occupy Egypt'.

I says, "Law! wotever for," as is a beastly place, and smells orful, with all them filthy Turks about, as is a downright disgrace to their sect; and I don't believe as them old Pirrimids can be 'ole-some, and as to that Kiro, it did ought to be all pulled down and built up agin, with them narrer alleys, and donkey's a-comin' thro', a-knockin' you about, and smells enuf to pison you, wot with their cookin' and stifly ways, as talks a deal about their washin', and will take and wash theirselves afore you, in a fountain, jest for all the world as tho' they was sparrers in a puddle, as is like their beastly impidence; but I don't call them clean ways, nor yet decent, but then wot can you expect from Turks.

Well, as I were a-sayin', Brown, he kep' on a-readin' about these 'ere savidges up to bed time, as reglar filled my 'ead with butcheries and 'orrers all night, as aint good things to go to bed on, partikler thro' Brown a-goin' on so about our takin' Egypt', partikler as we'd been and bought the Sewers Canal, as runs into the Red Sea, as'll be a pleasant thing for them as 'ave to cross it; bilin' 'ot as it always is, as is why it's called Red, thro' it bein' that 'ot, as I've 'eard parties as 'ave gone thro' it to Injier speak on.

So Brown says, "Oh! wot a woman you are to

run on ; don't you know as it's our road to Injy, as we wants to keep clear, and that's why we wants Egyp' "

" Well, then," I says, " why not take it, and let them poor slaves be treated that shameful, and beat about like Black'eath donkeys, as is enuf to make your blood bile ; tho' I'm sure I aint no partikler call to speak up for donkeys, as 'ave pitched me about like a ship in a storm, as the sayin' is ; and when down at Ramsgit only for a day, and a-settin' on the sands along with Mrs. Clisby, as is down there for the sea air, so 'ad chairs close down agin the water's hedge ; and if two of them dratted boys didn't take and drive both their donkeys slap agin our chairs, as swep' 'em clean off their legs, and might 'ave been carried out to sea, thro' the tide a-runnin' out that strong ; but saved myself, a-layin' 'old of one of them long seats, by the back, as I pulled over along with two ladies, as was a-settin' on it with a old gent, as were a-readin' to 'em at their work."

They screamed frightful, and the old gent declared as I'd broke 'is back, as, in course, weren't troo, tho' I 'ad smashed the back of the seat, as were a rotten old thing, and not worth ten shillin's, as is wot the old woman wanted to charge, and grumbled a deal over takin' five ; and as to that old gentleman, as lost 'is specs, and 'ad 'is book spilt

with the sea water, as well as the ladies' work, why, their rages was frightful.

As to that old feller, he used sich a espression to me, that I told 'im I'd give it 'im 'ot with my umbreller, over 'is shins, as I knowed were 'is weak pint, thro' bein' frightful bandy, as must 'ave been put down too soon in 'is child'ood, I should say; not as that were any escuse for 'im a-swearin', any more than it was for that doukey man to say as Mrs. Clisby and me was both a little bit on, as wasn't nothink more than our smellin' strong of pepper-mint drops, as we'd jest been and bought of a party with a tea-tray full of sweets, and were orful blowed about thro' the wind a-comin' that fresh off the sea, as made us all of a flutter; but as to licker, we 'adn't 'ad a drop arter our teas, even as we took at four, to be in good time on the sands.

So I ain't nothink favourable to say about donkeys, as 'ave always been my bane, as the sayin' is, by the sea-side.

Brown, he didn't seem to listen no more, so I says to Mrs. Padwick, as I should, go to bed, and she went up with me, to nail up a couple of bits of thick curtin over the winders, so as the sun shouldn't burn us out of our beds too carly in the mornin', thro' the room bein' a eastern aspect, and 'er blinds 'ad gone to be cleaned.

I wasn't partikler tired, nor yet full off to sleep,

when Brown come up, for I remembers a-sayin' to 'im, "I do 'ope as them Turks won't get the day, cos they'd be sure to come over 'ere, thro' bein' that spiteful agin us for showin' em up when they didn't pay their debts, cos, in course, as one Turkey took and borrered of another, it didn't matter about payin', cos it was all in the family, and in course the Sultin he never thought of payin' nor borrerin', but jest took wot he pleased, and give anyone a kick as dared not to look pleased when he'd robbed 'im; but John Bull weren't a-goin' to stand by and see the widder and orfin robbed. As to that Sultin a-gettin' out of it by sayin' he were dead, and as others must pay, 'ow do we know as he's dead; for I've 'eard of parties as 'ave give theirselves out as dead, and even put it in the paper, and been a-livin' like fightin'-cocks on the Continong all the time, as may be wot them Turkeys is a-doin' now.

I was a-thinkin' all about this 'ere Sultin, and then I see 'im, jest liko as he were took in the papers, the time as he were over 'ere.

He says to me, "'Ush! conceal me, that's a dear."

I says, "Wot!" I says, "unbeknown to my own 'usban." I says, "If you likes to get into the linen-press you can, if they wants to kill you, cos life is swcet; bnt," I says, "'ow did you get away?"

"Oh!" he says, "I got a pair of sissors out of my good lady's work-box, as I cut my way through the wall with it."

"But's wot's become of all your other ladies, as was fifty boat loads of your baggages."

He says, "I stole away on the quiet, and got to Bukin'am Pallis as quick as I could, and I 'ear 'em comin', and am too fat to get under the bed."

I says, "This ain't Bukin'am Pallis, my good man, this is——"

He says, "'Ush! don't say I said so; but's it's a dismal 'ole, as you can smell the cookin' all over the place; and as to the gardin, why, the trees and plants is as black as Noogate, like the sheep in the park, as is all double smuts."

I says, "That's rabbits, not sheep."

Says Queen Wictorier, as were takin' 'er tea all of a 'urry, in 'er bonnet, "It's quite true, my dear Martha, it's a uncomfortable 'ole, and people talk about me a-stoppin' there; why, I can't 'ave a winder open for the blacks, as I'm a sweep thro' every time I touches anythink; and as to washin' my 'ands, if I didn't keep my gloves on I should never be out of the suds; and as to me a-sendin' forinners to a 'otel, I does it out of kindness, cos they're better off there; and wot with the bother of keepin' servints, and one thing and the other, I 'ate 'ousekeepin'."

I says, "And no wonder, and things sich a price, and I do 'ear as there's a lot of servints out of place, as let's 'ope these 'ere lady-'elps will teach 'em a lesson, and know when they 'ave got a good place as they'd best keep it; but nobody don't seem to know their place now-a-days."

"Rong there, Martha, dear," says a voice in my ear, "I knows my place, and means to keep it," so I turns, and if there wasn't Disreely at my glass, a-tryin' on my new front, as I'd 'ung on the glass. I give a bit of a cough, and he turns 'is 'ead and says, "I'm only jest a-seein' 'ow it looks, thro' my 'air a-gettin' so thin, as I shall be drove to the artificial 'air line."

So I says, "Oh! pray make yourself at 'ome, and as you are 'ere, preaps you'll tell me what you're a goin' to do about them Turks."

He turns round and gives me a wink, and says, "You shall know as soon as anybody, but don't tell Queen Wictorier, cos she is that nervous about war, thro' bein' that proud of 'er harmy, as we're obliged to say as it's all fun, and only like playin' at battle."

"I do wish there mayn't be nothink unpleasant with Roosher," says Queen Wictorier, "tho' as to Alesandrowna, she didn't ought to 'ave gone off in sich a tiff, cos it don't look well in families, them words, and all about uothink, and as to turnin' up

'er nose at 'er 'ouse, if it was good enuf for my dear mother, it was good enuf for 'er."

"Yes," I says, "and for old King William and Quecn Adelid, as I remembers well a-seein' of the plates and dishes bein' carried away across the stable yard to the kitchen, as were a Sunday, and they'd got a dinner party, as some said was rong, as is all my eye, in my opinion."

I see 'er look werry glum, and then I remembered as in course she'd got reglar into them Scotch ways about the Sabbath, thro' a-livin' so long in Scotland, with nothink but cold porritch for breakfast, with cold aggis and bread and cheese for dinner, as in my opinion it's all that cold wittles a-layin' that 'eavy on the stomich, as drives 'em to the whisky, as they'll set a-sippin' and a-drammiu' all the arternoon and evenin', tho' I've knowed 'em 'ave a 'ot supper, partikler for the Minister, and then come the toddy and the talkin' about their naybours, as I'm sure the parish as I were a-stoppin' in, there wasn't anyoue as 'ad a character worth losin'.

Not but wot I do 'old with friends droppiu' in a Sunday, for it's jest the day for to see your family and friends round you, and if you cau afford it, give 'em a good dinner.

"Ah!" says Queen Wictorier, "Uncle Bill was a dear old man, tho' rough in 'is ways, and 'im and my Ma couldn't never get on together."

"Ah!" I says, "that's often the way in families, partikler when they settles late in life; but," I says, "I were pleased for to see that dear King of 'Anover over 'ere last time, as jest missed a-seein' of your majesty; not as he could 'ave see you, poor dear, but I'm told as he knows everybody's voice in a instant; but law, it is singler to look back and think of 'im, a bit of a boy, as I well remembers 'im, and your grashus a gal, as did used to wear your royal 'air in ringlets."

Ah! dear me, time do fly with us all, as seems like a dream.

It turns and says to Disreely, "I 'ope as you aint been and rumpled my 'air."

He says, "Your 'air, indeed, why, it's no better than a wig, and I do 'ate Wigs."

"I'll thank you to remember as I'm fond on 'em," says Queen Wictorier, "as was my father's friends, and that kind dear Lord Melbun."

"Ah!" I says, "as did used to fall asleep arter dinner at your royal table."

"Yes, and why not?" says Queen Wictorier, "he was like a father to me."

"Well," I says, "talkin' of wigs, your own grashus 'ead of 'air 'ave lasted wonderful."

Says Gladstin, a-givin' me a wink, "It's all werry fine talkin', but I was willin' to be Wig or anything to please er, and yet she wouldn't let me

be Archbishop of Canterbury. I wish as I'd 'ad the chance of the place, I'd 'ave 'ad a turn at 'em all, from the Pope down to Spurgin."

"Ah!" I says, "that's 'the wust of you, William, you're always a-fidgetin' and a-changin' about, do be quiet, that's a good feller, cos nobody don't care wot you thinks, and they won't 'ave you for Pope thro' bein' a family man, as ain't allowed, tho' I've 'eard say as Cardinal Mannin' is a widderer, but didn't get made a Card'nal for to console 'im, like I 'eard of a party as were made a bishop to make up for the loss of 'is children in the measles."

Says the Sultin, "I'm nearly stifled."

I says, "Wherever 'ave you got to?"

"Come," I says, "that won't do," for if he 'adn't gone and got into our spare bed, atween the blankets, as wasn't made up. I says, "You come out."

He says, "Shan't, I can't."

I says, "That's rubbish." Cos I knowed as he'd got in with 'is clothes on, as is their dirty beastly Turkey 'abits.

He says, "The moment as I gets out of bed, the Rooshins fires down the chimbley."

I says, "I 'opes not, for there's all my best chiney in the cupboard by the side of the fire, as'll be all smashed to atoms."

"Never mind your chiney," says Gladstin, "I've

got lots as I'll send you, as'll be as good as new when riveted."

Says Mrs. Gladstin, "Oh! pray, take it, Mrs. Brown, for he goes a-pokin' about up them back slums, and a-buyin' a lot of rubbish, as he sends 'ome, and I don't know where to put it."

I says, "No thankee, it only 'arbours dust, and I don't care about 'avin' other people's things, but," I says, "talkin of that, wotever 'ave the Prince of Wales done with all them Injin presents, as must reglar fill the 'ouse up from cellar to garrit."

"Well," says Queen Wictorier, "I told 'im as I couldn't take nothink in for 'im, for I've got Injy shawls and pickles, with otter of roses and ivory fans enough to stock a bazaar."

"Ah!" I says, "that's the way with them Injins, they'll give away everythink, not as they means you to take 'em; but only jest to touch 'em with your 'and, but in course the Prince, he weren't up to their ways, so naturally took all as they give 'im, and that in course soon stopped 'em, as is as well, or else we should ave 'ad to send the Channil Fleet to bring 'em 'ome, and while they was gone the Rooshins might come a-stealin' up the Tems, and land at Gravesend, cos they knows that way to come over us, thro' a-bringin' that there Duchess of Edinburrer that way, as in my opinion did ought to 'ave come the reglar road, and not 'ave put them

Rooshins up to all them quiet dodgey ways, as in course Queen Wictorier keeps to 'erself."

"Ah!" says a voice, "and 'ere we all are in Tilberry Fort, in the deepest dunjins, and loaded with chains."

I says, "Wot for?"

"Why," says Brown, "all thro' you abusin' the Merrykins, as 'ave got that wild, as they've been and took England."

I says, "Go along with your nonsense, took England indeed, they're a deal more likely to 'ave took theirselves off into the backwoods, as them red Injins will pay 'em out, I 'opes."

Says Queen Wictorier, "I'm a-goin' to run down to the Nore, jest to see if we're all ready with them guns."

I says, "For mussy sake, don't land while they're a-tryin' 'em, as might 'ave your royal 'ead blowed off as did werry nigh 'it the Commander in Chief, as were that venturesome, would go near, but then he's used to be under fire."

"Ah!" says Queen Wictorier, "poor George, he's 'ad a twister with 'is gout this time; and as to Albert Edward, he's cnuf to drive anyone wild, a-goin' a-'untin', as is wot I never could abear 'is poor dear father to do, tho' he was never 'appy out of the saddle; well," she says, "there's one comfort about 'is bein' laid up, it cuts the season short, as is

a noosance, and oh ! my dear Martha, wotever you do, never give a gardin party, as is a reglar mob."

"Not as they comes near me, cos I never sees anyone but them faces as I've seen so long as I'm tired on ; but never in my life did I see sich a bilin' of greens as come to Chisick last year, as we borrers for to 'ave them parties at, for bad as that bit of back gardin is at the 'back of Bukin'am Pallis, I ain't a-goin' to 'ave it all tore up and trampled down by a crowd like that. Besides, some on 'em would be sure to be a-wantin' to go into the 'ouse, a-peepin' and a-pryin'."

"Ah !" I says, "you must be worreted to death, wot with one thing and another, and I wonders as you don't break down under it, wot with all the travellin' back'ards and for'ards as you 'ad last year, fust to Scotland, then to Osbung, and then to Germiny, as they won't let you be quiet ; and then them forriners as is always a-fidgetin' in and out of the place ; as it's all werry fine a-talkin' about the wonders as steam is, but I considers as it's always a-keepin' parties in 'ot water."

"I must say," says Quecn Wictorier, "as I'm thankful," she says, "as I ain't likely to 'ave no more Sultins ; and if that there Shar should come agin on the quiet, in the name of Smith, as is called incogniter, the same as that old Loui Philip cut away from France in, why, in course, I shouldn't do

more than move in passin', cos really in 'ot weather them 'eathen beasts is wuss than inside of a bus full of Scotch in their kilts, a-goin' to a review."

"Ah!" I says, "busses is brilin' work in 'ot weather, and there's a many as thinks as leavin' off their things cools 'em, as is mistook in the long run, the same as Mr. Dumblain at a pic-nic up in the 'Ighlands, as took and set down with 'is kilt on in some red-'ot wood ashes, as they'd biled the kittle over, and he thought was cold, and flopped 'isself on the top on for a soft seat, without a-thinkin'. I never did see nobody ever spring up so sharp in this world, as made 'im rush for the loch, as they calls it, and set there up to 'is neck in water all the rest of the evenin', till dusk, and went 'ome a-kneelin' agin the cushin of 'is own chay, and kep' 'is bed for many a day, with 'is plaid burnt to tinder, and all 'angin' in rags about 'is 'eels, poor feller, tho' it were 'is own fault; but that's the worst of them Scotch, they are that 'asty in their ways."

"Well," says Queen Victorier, "I can't say that, for tho' Brown is wuth 'is wait in gold up behind the carridge, he's a slow coach, and it's as much as my place is wuth to ring for 'im when at meals, as won't take a order not from either Bectrice or Wales, and quite cheeks Christshun, tho' werry kind to Leepold, thro' 'im bein' that delicit; and wot I like 'im for is as 'e's that kind to poor dear Lorne."

I says, "And well he may, considerin' as both is Scotch. Lorne's your own son-in-law, and," I says, "tho' I don't care for either of my gals' 'usban's, I wouldn't let no servint of mine be'ave disrespectful; and if you don't keep Brown in 'is place, he'll be a trouble to you afore he's done."

"Law, bless you," says she, "keep 'im in 'is place, why, if I was to send 'im away, he wouldn't go; not as ever 'e's cheeky to me, tho' a short way of speakin', and wouldn't put on pants not to save 'is life; but there ain't no one as could get 'im off the back of my carridge, while I'm inside."

"Well," I says, "I 'oners 'im for it, cos I likes to see anyone a-stickin' to wot they considers their right places; not but wot you may do that too much, like poor Mrs. Malins, as set down in the docks on a coil of ropes, leastways, dropped on to it, thro' bein' dead beat, all along of 'er feet a-throbbin' that orful, and there set ever so long in tryin' to get up, as were reglar planted like a tree as nine dock labourers couldn't get 'er up, thro' them ropes bein' fresh tarred, and was only got off at last thro' cuttin' the bit out of both 'er gownd and slip, and 'ad to borror a cloak at a public 'ouse to go 'ome in."

I says, "I 'opes there aint no fears of war a-bustin' out, while we're on the river, cos if we could

get ashore, we might catch a train, and get you safe into the Tower."

Says Queen Victorier, "You don't think as I should run away."

I says, "Don't be too wentersome, with all your sons away, escept Leapold, as is delicit, and Wales laid up with a bile."

Jest then I 'eard a reglar bust of firin'. I says, "'Ere they are ; let's run for it," and I ketched 'old of 'er royal harm, and if she didn't say wot the devil are you at—let me alone. I says, "'Elp ! murder ! it's the Rooshins," for the guns was reglar stunnin' me. Jest then, someone give me a shake, and says, "Wake up, old gal," and if it wasn't Brown-a-settin' up in bed, as said as I'd nearly wrenched 'is 'ead off. I says, "You don't mean to say as I've been dreamin' "

He says, "In course you 'ave."

"Mussy on us !" I says, "why, they've begun agin ;" for jest then a fresh wolley bust out. "Wot-ever cau it be ?"

"Why," says Brown, "the sojers in the park a-practisin' "

"Well, then," I says, "I considers it shameful, a-breakin' anyone's rest, and enuf to break them wiunders, and," I says, "I aint 'ardly 'ad a wink of sleep."

Says Brown, as were a-gettin' up, "Aint you.

Well, all I can say you was a-snorin' afore eleven, and now it's jest gone seven."

"Well, then," I says, "I'm up as soon as you're out of the room, and ready for a cup of tea," as I relishes double arter broken rest.

That werry next day we went to Newmarket, and I must say as 'orse racin' is werry fassinatin' sort of work, and no wonder as young people takes so to it, thro' a-lovin' 'orses that natral; not as I 'olds with a young lord a-rooinin' of 'isself over 'em, and a-borrerin' of money for to put on 'em, as is foolishness, cos, in course, a 'orse don't care wot's on 'is back, so as ho aint backed too 'eavily, as rooins 'im and 'is owner too.

But as to that there young Markis a-pitchin' into that old money-lender, thro' givin' of a false name, that don't become no lord, not even a Lord Mare, as is, in course, nat'rally fond of 'orses, but wouldn't forget 'isself like that.

I don't see, as Brown were a-sayin', as there's any more 'arm in a poor man a-bettin' than a rich one, and for that matter the poor man is often obligated to pay, cos he can't get no one to trust 'im.

As to bettin' a-rooinin' parties, why, it don't matter whether it's a dook or a dustman, if they bets, and lays odds as they can't pay, both must be rooined.

As to poor Mrs. Childs 'avin' of 'er licence threatened, for allowin' bettin' at 'er bar, as was only tossin' for a pot, why, they did ought to put down Pattershells, as did used to be at 'Igh Park Corner, and all them other bettin' clubs.

As Brown were a-sayin', they might as well go into the City and stop a deal of the tradin', and did ought to send missunaries over to Merryker, to convert 'em from Wall Street, as is where they're a-gamblin' all day, and aboard them steamers on the Missysippy River; why, they did used to gamble night and day. I've 'eard say as often ended in murder of theirselves or someone else. So long as they murders theirselves, it don't much matter; but they will go a-butcherin' them Injins, as is a deal better be'aved than Merrykins.

I must say as I feels for all them savidges, as they calls 'em, when parties goes a-interferin' with them, a-pretendin' to make 'em better, and nice esamples they set 'em, if the savidges could see 'em at 'ome.

That's why I never can pity them Merrykiu sojers, as went out west to the Praree, as they calls it, a-searchin' arter them tribes as won't knock under to 'em, and got murdered by them red fire Injins, as I'm sure they've treated like savidges.

The same as that book as Brown was a-readin' about a pious commander as was killed by savidges,

when a-tryin' to land on their 'ighland to do them good.

But as I says, 'ow is savidges to know what's up when they sees a big ship at anchor, and all them sailors a-comin' ashore; as they can see what their little game is.

It's all werry fine, but wotever should we say if big ships was to come off Margit, and strange fellers was to land and begin a-larkin' about with the nuss maids and children on the sands, and a-eatin' up everythink in the town, let alone robbin' and stealin', and preaps bring the measles and small pox among us, and then fire at the perlice and go off; and shouldn't we look out for the next wessel as come along, and jest wait for the crew to come ashore and give it 'em 'ot.

It's all my eye a-sayin' as were a-goin' for to sivelize 'em, but they don't want to be sivelized, and as to goin' to conwert 'em, we'd better settle wot we believes ourselves at 'ome fust, afore we go to teach others.

I'm sure I'm drove mad with my friends' religions, for wot with Miss Pilkinton a-settin' under a minister as says no one can't be saved but them as 'as seats at 'is church; and Mrs. 'Unter a-goin' arter the Plymouth Brethren; whilst Mrs. Belcher, she's Catherlick and Apple stall-ick; then Miss Catlin, she's 'igh Church, and Mrs. Potter's a Baptist. As

to Mr. Oglin, he's the Wesleyin way. Mrs. Ortin, she reglar enjoys Spurgin, as is full of 'is larks of a Sunday ; and as to Miss Taplin, she runs arter a party as don't believe in the devil, and says as no one won't be lost, and as it's all a spree ; so wot with one and another goin' on about their religion, sometimes tea at Mrs. Padwick's is a reglar Babyland, partikler when young Purvis comes in, as is a 'igh ritsherlist, and goes on that wiolent agin both the Pope and the Archbishop of Canterbury, and says as the Queen aint the 'ead of the church, and all manner like that, as is downright orful to 'ear.

So I says, " I suppose as it'll end in every one 'avin' of 'is church to 'isself, like a party as I knowed as 'ad tried all religions, and took to wurshipin' 'isself at last in is own back parlour, and made 'is wife and dorter and two boys, along with the servint, come and wurship 'im too, as aint wot I calls liberty of consence.

For my part I'd rather wurship a graveu imidge myself than a bottle-nosed old bagman, with 'is eyebrows a-meetin' like a bush over 'is nose, as snorted and snored when wide awake, as took snuff by the bushel, and would talk to me about wakenin' grace, as was all Dutch to me, but when he got a-callin' on me 'is dear friend, and a-porin' on me, I says, " It's werry kind of you, but I don't want

none of your wakenin' graces, as you'd better keep for your Sunday School."

He give me a look as showed 'atred in 'is 'art, cos he knowed as I'd 'eard about 'is bein' turned out of one Sunday School, and not let into another thro' 'is comin' of 'is wakenin' graccs too strong. I do ate 'umbug, and parties a-pretendin' to be wot they aint. All as Brown says is, if you considers your religion a good one, stick to it, and if you thinks as there's a better, why, cut the old one, and lay 'old on to the new. But as to my part, I've knowed sich deceptions in parties as calls theirselves pious, that I always shakes my 'ead and says, "I'd rather see your hactions than 'ear about your tracks and your chapel goin's."

Not as I 'olds with partics a-sayin' as they aint no religion, but does all the good as they can. I always thinks to myself, the good as you do aint much account, or else you wouldn't talk about bein' no religion, cos if you aint some sort you'd never do nothink for nobody. Net as everyone as is on the turf aint religious, cos I knowed a party myself as were a squire in Sussex as kep' racers, and went to church reglar, as he took and built out of 'is winnins', and 'ad the bishop to lunch, tho' they did quarrei arterwards about the use of the surplus, as the parson wouldn't give up to the squire.

And down at Newmarket I 'card say as they

often give the parson a stray pony for the poor, as was werry like the generous churchwarden as give away wot didn't belong to 'im.

But to 'ear Mrs. Bulteel, as is a jockey's widdler, talk of the sums as is lost and won over racin', you wouldn't credit it, and 'ow the turf 'ave swallered up 'ole families.

"Ah!" I says, "like a land slip, or the hearthquake of Lisbun, as were 'eard for miles round, as I once see a picter on at the Collyseum, not in Rome, but the Regency Park, as is all built over now.

It give me a dreadful turn, a-'avin' of a think like that so near town, as might spread like the esplosion on the Canal in the Regency Park, as blowed the winders in up Kentish Town.

I'm sure it were orful to see that hearthquake, as no doubt in time were the ruin of that Collyseum, and reglar undermined it, and no wonder, for it give me a bilious attack only seein' of it once.

"Yes," says Mrs. Bulteel, "the turf's as bad, for my 'usban' 'ave see Lords a-walkin' about without a penny to bless theirselves, and more than one on 'em obligated for to go thro' the 'oop."

"Ah!" I says, "the same as I see 'em a-doin' at the surcus as I went to."

"Bless your 'art, no," says she; "I means, go thro' the court, to get out of their debts."

I says, "If you calls that a-gettin' out of

debt, it's a easy way to do it, and it's my opinion that them bankerup laws is made for rogues to swindle 'onest men by, for I knowed a feller as lived up Newcastle way, as took and robbed everyone, as was considered that respectable thro' 'avin' of a fine 'ouse, but he'd been and settled that on 'is wife, with a lot more property, and then goes in for lickydation, as they calls it, as is robbin' every one all round, and took false oaths by the bushel. I don't remember 'is name, but I shall some day, and I'll trot 'im out, a lyin' thievin' waggerbone."

Says Mrs. Bulteel, "Ah! there's dark games goes on with them bettin' men, wot with bribin' of the boys for to rope the 'orses, and sometimes a-gettin' the fav'rite pisoned, and I'm sure as I remembers a party as took and scratched the fav'rite jest out of spite."

"Well," I says, "'orses in gen'ral likes bein' scratched, poor things, the same as dogs and donkeys, tho' in course it depends 'ow you do it."

So Mrs. Bulteel, as is quite the lady, she didn't bust out a-larfin', like Miss Pilkinton would, but explained to me all about scratchin', as were werry kind. Not as she were a party as Mrs. Padwick would incourage, thro' 'avin' 'eard as she were fast in her youth.

"Well," I says, "with a 'usban for a jockey,

she nat'rally would be, or she couldn't keep up with 'im."

Mrs. Padwick only tossed 'er 'ead and said I were a deal too good-natered, but as she wouldn't set down to tea with such parties as 'ad 'ad them goin's on, wotever they might be now.

So in course I 'ad to drop Mrs. Bulteel, as must 'ave been a beauty in 'er day, and 'ad a comfortable 'ome and a nice incum.

We 'ad a werry nice time at Newmarket, with lots of friends, and a-goin' somewhere every day. And little did I think as the friends we was a-stoppin' along with was reglar on the hedge of a pressypitch, as turned out like that. He 'ad to bolt all of a 'urry, and she went off like a shot with 'er two children while we was out for a walk, and 'ad only jest time to get our things out of the 'ouse afore a judge's horder come and collared the lot, and as it was I left my 'air brush and sponge behind, as I went and asked for in the evenin', and a low feller slammed the door in my face, and said, "You better brush yourself, you old sponger." I didn't make 'im no anser, but went to the lodgiu's as me and Mrs. Padwick 'ad took.

But as I were a-sayin' to Mrs. Padwick, there's no tellin' when you gets up in the mornin' wot's a-goin' to 'appen afore night, cos we're a blinded lot, that's wot we are, and can't tell wot a day may

bring forth, and that's wot put poor Mr. Uwits out so when he come 'ome and found it was twins, as wasn't expected till the end of June, thro' bein' a comershul, as in course acts under orders, so can't reckon to a day.

As to lookin' forward too much, why, I calls it presumption, as can't reckon on your tea in peace, the same as poor old Mr. Weebles, tho' nobody couldn't call 'im orty, nor yet puffed up, for he was one of them flat figgers as looked as tho' he was only a suit of clothes, and not much of them neither, and a nice life she led 'im, a-orderin' of 'im about like a 'eathen black negro slave, as were as 'armless a man as any Greenwich penshuner could be in this world, and come as near to a wiolent end as a toucher, as the sayin' is, thro' a-walkin' 'ome down the Bow Road as quiet as a lamb with some water-creases in 'is 'at, as is a coolin' things for tho' 'ead in tho dog days, and a few wrinkles in 'is 'ankercher, thro' bein' fond of a relish for 'is tea, and a wild bull a-comin' up behind 'im unawares, as sent 'im a-flyin' sky 'igh, as the sayin' is, as must 'ave been certing death only for tho dung cart, as was passin', as he come down on, bein' that soft as broke 'is fall, but in course shook all the creases out of 'is 'at, as scattered the wrinkles to the winds of Evan, as the sayin' is.

Then for 'er to go on at 'im when brought in ou

a ladder, a-sayin' as he must 'ave run agin the bull, as would be a-temptin' providence, as the sayin' is, and 'ave been walkin' backards, as aint likely, the same as the Prince of Wales a-goin' to a bull fight over in Spain, as if he 'adn't 'ad enuf of them wild beasts and savidges a-fightin' over in Injier.

But that ever I should 'ave lived to see Queen Wictorier made a Hempress surprises me, for if any one 'ad told me, I should 'ave give them the false-'ood to their werry faces, cos if Queen Wictorier liked to be the Lord Mare, I should like to see any one as would dare for to say as she shouldn't be, as I'm sure you'd see the Lord Mare 'isself down on 'is knees, with all 'is corporation a-grovellin' in the dust for to do 'er 'oner, and a-offerin' 'er every thing. Not but wot she's too much the lady to stoop to pick up anything as didn't belong to 'er; but as to 'er bein' a Hempress, why, I considers as would be a-lettin' of 'erself down, for to be like them Brumagen Bonyparties, as calls theirselves hemprers and hempresses.

As some do say as the French will 'ave 'em back, as preaps they may, but it'll only be to kick 'em out agin, or else 'ave Beastmark come down on 'cm agin 'otter than ever, and make 'em all into the Germin Umpire, as will settle all the ashes of Europe some fine day, as Brown always says, till

the Rooshins is strong enuf to come and punch every one's 'ead all round, tho' in course we English shall be all right, cos of 'avin' the Dook of Edinburrer's children, as thro' bein' Rooshin on the mother's side, will up and speak for their father's country, and wouldn't stand by and see 'em trampled under foot.

Brown, as 'ad jest come in, says that won't wash, cos he says as a rule all royal families is a-plottin' agin one another, like old Lewy Filip in France; "but," he says, "things looks fishy for them Turks, as is a-goin' on their old games, as I'll read you about when we've 'ad a cup of tea."

And so he did, as made my blood run 'cold a-'earin' about them wretches a-takin' and givin' a young feller them bastarnadoes that 'ot on the soles of 'is feet, as he took and died on it.

I says, "Won't Gladstin be up in the stirrups now? but," I says, "what a mussy as that there Markiss as we sent over there didn't ketch it, along with 'is good lady as went along with 'im," and right she were, for I'm sure I wouldn't trust Brown among them pollygammonin' ways, tho' he is the best 'usban as ever trod shoe-leather.

I says, "Wotever shall we do now, as in course Queen Wictorier won't allow no sich goin's on among them Turks, with the Princess of Wales a-stoppin' close by along with 'er brother, as aint above

a stone's throw, as the sayin' is, as might be carried off by them brigguns, as is all over the place, and no wonder when they has sich esamples as Beast-mark and that there Wictor Manuel, as aint no better in my opinion."

Cos robbery is robbery all the same, whether it's kings or 'orse chanters, and that's wot I says about the turf, as may be all 'onerable and above board, but in course may be all under'and ways, like the mole as goes grubbin' about underground, and yet may overthrow a king on 'orseback, the same as he done by that there Willyim the Conkeror, as I never can abear, nor yet 'is wife, as I considers 'er wuss than 'im, thro' bein' 'er own father as she turned agin and robbed, but it come 'ome to 'er, a nasty ussey. As makes me think as the turf did ought to be put down, but Brown often says certingly not, and as it is a dooty in a nobleman for to incourage a fine breed of 'orscs.

I says to Brown, "That's all werry well, but," I says, "I'm sure as steeplechases is disgraces, for I shan't never forget a-stoppin' down in Kent, and a-takin' of a walk along with Mrs. Lumbly, as is a slim figger, like a gal, tho' a grandmother for years, and would 'ave me go up a 'ill that steep as I thought I never should get my breath agin in this world, afore I was 'arf way.

She went skippin' along, and left me a-toilin' and

a-pantin' up to the top, as when I got there, wasn't nothink to speak on in the way of a view ; not different to down below.

Mrs. Lumbley, she walked on, cos she said there were a pint as you could see the top of St. Paul's from.

I says to myself, " Bother St. Paul's, and you too, I don't want to see St. Paul's, neither top nor bottom," for I was reglar beat, and a-feared to set on the grass thro' so much wet about.

I looks round for a seat, and see, a little way off, a short stone wall, as was jest 'igh enough for to set on, and 'urries to it.

I looks down below and see a crowd a long way off, as I thought it was races a-goin' on.

I says, " Bless me, wo ain't nowheres near Epsom, as ain't 'ills, but downs."

But there, sure enuf, was 'orses and parties a-ridin' 'em, as looked like racers.

" Well," I says, " I 'ave got a fine view, and glad I am as we come up 'ill, cos if I'd been below them racers might 'ave run me down."

Well, arter a bit I see them all start, 'elter skelter, a-ridin' like mad all over the place, and then they turned a corner and I couldn't see 'em no more.

So I goes across to where there was another wall, with a flag on a pole close by, but thro' 'urryin'

quite lost my breath, and 'ad to pull up, and dropped on to the turf jest this side of the wall.

I 'eard 'orses a-galopin', but I says they never can't he a-comin' up 'ill like that, as is enuf to break the wind of a helefant.

The thoughts 'adn't crossed my lips when 'elter skelter come them fellers all over the wall as I were a-sittin' under the shadder on.

I give a yell of terror, and up I puts my umbreller, jest as a 'orse were clearin' the wall close agin me.

The noble creetur knowed by his instinx as he weren't to 'urt me, so give a rear and a plunge at one side, and over he went rider and all, as was a reglar stunner for both.

I've 'eard langwidge, and read it, hut never nothink like wot a party used to me, as come a-runnin' up.

I says, "Look 'ere, young man, I'm a free-born Briton, and if you dares talk to me like that, I'll spile your beauty for you."

I goes to that party as 'ad fell off the 'orse, as didn't seem to 'ave no senses left, and for my part should say never 'adn't any in 'is 'ead to ride up a 'ill like that.

He looked dreadful bad as the man pulled 'im away from the 'orse, as got on 'is legs, looked round a minnit, and then bolted away, as showed 'is sense.

I says, "Give 'im a drop of this," a-'oldin' out my little flat bottle.

The feller took it, a-sayin', "It ain't fissick, is it, old gal?"

I says, "No; the werry best Cognac as was ever made, so none of your cheek." I says, "Drop a little down 'is throat;" as he did, no sooner than he brought the colour back in 'is face; tho' he couldn't get up.

So I says, "You go, and get 'elp, and I'll stop and see as no more wild 'orse Mazeppers don't come a-ridin' over 'im."

So off he went, and I says to the young feller, as were a fine-made chap, and uncommon good lookin', I says, "Take another pull at the bottle," as he did, and give me a wink, a-sayin', in a werry faint voice, "You ain't a bad judgo of the article, old lady."

I says, "You must be a loonatic let loose, my dear young man, to come a-ridin like Ashley's, all over the place. Wotever made you do it?"

"Why," he says, "don't you know wot a steeple-chase is?"

I says, "A steeple wot?"

"A steeple-chase," says he.

I says, "That must be a 'unt arter a church."

I says, "Are you a parson?"

He says, "No; but there's Parsons a-ridin' it."

"Well," I says, "it's all werry well for them as is no doubt anxshus to get a church, as is 'ow they gets their livin's; but," I says, "you do surprise me."

He give a smile, and then a groan, and said as 'is arm were that painful, as I jest moved for 'im, and could tell in a hinstant as it were broke; and I do believe if I 'adn't give 'im more brandy as he'd 'ave fainted.

It was a good bit afore that young man come back, and two or three more with a 'urdle, as they made a sort o' bed on, and carried that poor feller away.

He was quite the gentleman, he was, for he would shake 'ands with me, and say as it weren't no fault of mine, as I could 'ave told 'im. When I got back to Mrs. Lumbley's, for she'd missed me, and gone 'ome, a-wonderin' where I was, but 'ad 'eard of that young gentleman's axidence, I 'eard as he were the squire's son, and 'ad broke both 'is arm and 'is collar-bone.

I says, "If he's a 'ealthy subjie', he'll soon get over that; I must say as I don't pity 'im, tho' I do the 'orses, poor things, as is rode to death."

I'm sure it's a mussy as I wasn't squashed to a mummy; as only proves my words about the country bein' that dangerous.

For wot with mad bulls, and 'untin', and shootin' all about the place, let alone dogs, as is as fierce as lions, with packs of 'ounds a-comin' on you

suddin, as is like wild beasts, you ain't never safe ; and can't call a cab, nor yet 'ail a bus for to get out of the way.

So I says, "Lundin, with all thy faults, I love thee still, as the sayin' is," as was King Charles's last words in mountin' of the scaffoldin', as 'ave stood 'is ground ever since, at Cherrin' Cross, as I do 'ope they won't pull 'im down, poor feller ; as ain't in the way, and saves you from the busses, as comes a-drivin' all round you, like wild beasts broke loose, a-rushin' from Kentish Town to the Wictorier Station, and a maun on 'em runs to St. Tommusse's 'Ospital, as shows wot lots of axidences there must be, a-judgin' from the bus loads, as is always a-goin' there.

Not but wot Newmarket's a nice opin place enuf, as we stopped at over the week ; and I do like to see them 'orses bein' exercised, let alone them young swells as is bein' trotted out, as they calls it, as I've 'eard say drops their money that free on the turf, as swallers it up that fast, as they only loses more in tryin' to pick it up agin.

But, as I says, that comes of racin' about that fast, cos if they was only to go gently, they might pick it up agin easy ; but no, they're all 'urry, scurry, and drive.

I 'eard of one young feller, as were a dook, or a markiss at the werry least, as they told me were reglar downright reckless, and he must 'ave been,

for he went and stood that 'eavy on all 'is 'orses, and they all broke down one arter the other, and then 'ad to go thro' the 'oop.

I says he must 'ave been a downright idjot, cos no one don't never stand on a 'orse but them parties as you see at a surcuss, and they're in gen'ral light characters, as can 'op thro' a 'oop, and play all them games in their fleshin's, as isn't a way for dooks, nor yet markisses to go on.

They all do seem werry light-'arted on the turf, as a good many on 'em comes out on the spree, as the sayin' is. But, law, it ain't no spreedin' work with them as luck goes agin, and gets into the 'ands of the Jews, as brings 'em down to their marrer bones in double quick time.

Not as I blames them Jews, cos they lends them young lords money as they may never see agin, and sometimes don't ; cos, in course, you can't get blood out of a stone, nor yet money out of a dook as ain't got none, tho' he may 'ave a 'andle to 'is name.

I'm sure I remembers, werry well, a lord, least-ways, he said he were the rightfui 'eir to one, as took and 'umbugged a old fool into marryin' im.

She were a money-lendin' lawyer's widdler, as 'ad lent this young feller money, and when he was dead, the old idjot, as 'ad got all 'is money left 'er, were gammoned about bein' my lady, and so they was married.

She was a reglar old 'Yo, dressed lamb fashion, as the sayin' is, with 'er yaller shinion, and 'er front air dyed, with all the grey a-stickin' out in a tuft be'ind. They was that lovin' when I see 'em at Newmarket, as was only married three weeks, as he'd been and brought 'er down, leastways, she would come, cos she wouldn't trust 'im out of 'er sight.

They was a-drivin' all over the place, and livin' in that style at the 'otel, jest like fightin' cocks, as the sayin' is.

It were early spring time, and a chill in the hair, and when I see 'er a-goin' out in the pheaton, as he were a-drivin', dressed like a gal, all painted and powdered, I says to myself, you'll get the browncreeturs afore you're a week older, and troo my words proved, for she were out on the Friday, and a corpse Sunday mornin'; and he never got a fardin' of the money, for she died without a will, and it all went to 'er fust 'usban's family, as was 'is nat'ral hairs.

But of all the falls for pride, to 'ave it were that there Mrs. Belper, as 'ad 'eld 'er 'ead that 'igh, as bull beef weren't nothink to 'er, in 'er four-wheel shay, only a-movin' 'orty when she see me at the Darby. Not as I minded it, for we was a deal more jolly in our shay-cart, than ever she were in 'er pheaton, as they called it, as wasn't nothink better

than a cruelty wan, in my opinion—one poor beast of a 'orse to drag five on 'em, with their purwishuns, to Hepsom and back. But, law bless you, she were reglar on the 'igh ropes, as the sayin' is, a-offerin' of me shampain out of a silver tankerd, when I was a-walkin' by 'er carridge, atween the races. I says, "No, thankee, Mrs. Belper, I've jest 'ad some beer, as I've paid for." I knowed that were a nasty one for 'er, cos they was over 'ead and ears in debt, all over the place.

If she didn't take and shy the shampain all over me, and then I see as she were not only cut 'erself, but all them as was with 'er. I didn't take no notice, but gets back to our cart, and there I got Mrs. Arkwright, as was with me, for to wipe me down with a damp cloth, as got that sticky stuff all off my shawl and dress. I didn't say nothink to Brown, nor yet to Arkwright, and told 'is good lady not to say a word; cos if I 'ad told Brown, he'd 'ave took and pulled Belper's nose, cos it was 'im as set 'is wife on for to throw it.

It were a lovely day, with a full moon to go 'ome by, so I says to Brown, "Don't let's 'urry 'ome, but let the rush go fust, and we can take it quiet."

Cos I know'd that were wot Mrs. Arkwright would like, thro' bein' from the country, least-

ways, Brummagem, as they calls it, so likes quiet nat'rally.

She 'adn't never seen the races afore, and as 'er and 'er 'usban' is werry kind to Brown, when he's down in Brummagem, we thought as we'd ask 'em up.

We 'ad enjoyed ourselves, and didn't leave the course till jest on eight o'clock; cos Brown 'ad got the shay-cart from a friend at Tootin', where we was to drive back to, and then get 'ome by train.

The road was pretty clear all along, tho' some rantipole chaps, in a coach-and-four, as was peltin' everyone with flour and oringes. They was jest in front of us, so Brown kep' be'ind for a good bit, when all of a suddin the Belpers come a-drivin' by, a-usin' jeers and insults, as they passed us.

They soon come up with that there rantipole lot on the coach, as begun a reglar pitch battle, with their flour and oringes, and pea-shooters, as ended in soder-water bottles. I 'eard the woomin screamin', and see Belper a-tryin' to get 'is 'orse past that coach, as, in course, weren't nothink agin four, tho' they was rats of things.

I see as that race couldn't last long, when all of a suddin if that four-'orse coachman didn't take and reglar drive slap into that shay of Belpers, and over it went a cropper, for I see the four wheels up in the hair, with my own eyes. I says, "Mussy on

us, Brown, they must all be killed; let's go and see."

So Brown he drove up, for as to them blackguards on the coach, they drove away, shoutin' with larfture.

When we got up to them Belpers, they was in a pretty pickle, a-layin' all over the place, with their cold wittles on the top on 'em; and there were a stout party a-settin' on Belper's 'ead, bein' that fur gone in lickin', as she didn't know wot she was a-doin' on; and I do believe if Brown and Arkwright 'adu't pulled 'er off, she'd 'ave sufflicated 'im.

Well, there wasn't no bones broke, so we 'elped 'em up; and two men, as come by, got the shay up, as 'ad gone into a ditch; and as the 'orse weren't 'urt, they was sobered a bit, off they was started, without a thankee to us.

'Ow they got 'ome 'evans knows; but two days arter Brown got a abusive note from Belper, accusin' 'im of runnin' into 'is shay, and a-upsettin' 'im, and wuss than that, 'ad the impidence to say as it was me as was the party as set on 'is 'ead. So Brown he sent Belper a anser as shet 'im up; for when they'd drove off, Brown 'ad picked up a small black welwet bag, as 'ad two packs of cards, as was all sorted for cheatin', and four loaded dice, besides some base coin, as let daylight into Mr. Belper's

little game down the road. So Brown only rote and said he'd found some property as he thought belonged to Mr. Belper, as he could 'ave by applyin' at Scotland Yard.

So we didn't 'ear no more of them Belpers till we was at Newmarket, where I 'eard as they was dredful bad off, and 'as she'd jest been near dead in 'er confinement.

"Ah!" I says, "that comes of marryin' without no prospect," as Mrs. Bulteel said often young women was drove to, thro' their employers a-turnin' on 'em out of a Sunday.

"Ah!" I says, "but they don't look afore they leaps," like Mary Ann Telbin, as was in a 'ouse of busyness, as didn't never purvide no dinner for their young people on a Sunday. So they was thrown on the wide world, as used to get took out by strangers, and ended with 'er a-throwin' of 'erself into the Surrey Canal.

Not as I believes as any respectable 'ouse of busyness would go on like that; but, in course, young people as is giddy, wants a escuse to be off with their pals, so tries to lay the blame on others; as is all their own fault, and so I've told 'em agin and agin; for as to them young fellers as aint got no characters to lose, they don't care for nothink, so, in course, a young woman did ought to be all the more partikler about them as she goes out with,

whether Sunday or work-a-day, as may make 'er a good 'usban' for all that.

Preaps the best day's work as ever that young Giddins ever done was marryin' my niece, 'Liza, a-settlin' down respectable, as was a gas-fitter, a-earnin' good wages, and fond of 'is pleasure, like the rest, and met 'Liza Pearce a-walkin' in the park, as was church time Sunday.

She was a pretty gal, and never one to speak to strangers; but she dropped 'er ankercher, as he picked up, and run arter 'er with it, so she thanks 'im, and nothink more weren't said, but 'is black whiskers 'ad took 'er fancy.

The next two Sundays was wet, but on the third he met 'er agin, jest near the same spot, so they spoke and took a bit of a walk, and then he asked where she were a-goin', and she said, "Nowhere's partikler."

So got a-strollin' on thro' the Kensinton Gardins when I met 'em, and pulls 'er up pretty short, and asks who that young man were, and findin' as he were almost a stranger, I made 'er come 'ome to tea with me, a-sayin' to that young man as if 'is inten-shuns was 'onerable, he might come to, as made some escuse at fust, but come arter all, but didn't get no chance of seein' of 'er 'ome, cos I walked with 'er myself to the bus, as would set 'er down at the 'ouse door where she lived; and made 'er

promise as she wouldn't go a-meetin' 'im no more, as kep' 'er word; but found out as it weren't gammon, 'im a-carin' for 'er, as was respectable, as the place where he worked at off Oxford Street, give 'im a character, so she brought 'im to tea the werry next Sunday, and was man and wife under three months, and 'ave been as steady as a rock, with four as fine children as you'd see in a day's walk.

I 'eard about them Belpers bein' that bad off at Newmarket thro' that young Piper, as 'ad throwed off his knee, and were as lively as a crickit, as the sayin' is.

So when I got back 'ome I found out where they was a-livin', and off I went to see 'er, as was a lodgin' close agin Whitecross Street, as did used to be a prison for debts, as is now all done away with.

It's a reglar rookery of a place, as is like a market for costers all over the place, with orful lookin' wittles.

It were ever so long afore I could find the court as she lived in, as ain't fit for no 'uman 'abitations, and will no doubt soon be down with all these ere improvements a-goin' on; but parties as I asked for Mrs. Belper 'adn't never 'eard the name, partikler a party as told me she were in the nussin' line.

So I took and described Mrs. Belper as a stout young woman, for she ain't much over thirty, with

a red face, and three children, and one under the month.

"Oh!" she says, "I know, the party as 'ave lived ere nearly two years, and 'er 'usban in trouble."

"Ah!" I says, "bad off?"

"Yes," says the party, "he got twelve months and 'ard labour, as is nearly killed 'im, tho' he ain't done more than two-thirds of 'is time, for," she says, "I was with 'er as much as I could be when that last child were born, as passes by under the name of Smith, as is the top back of the 'ouse next door to the coal shed, and ring the top bell, not as it's much use you're a-doin' of it, for the gal and boy is both out, and she ain't got the strength to get up and down stairs, and," she says, "where you misled me, mum, was in speaking about stout, why, she's as lean as a rail."

"Well, then," I says, "preaps it ain't 'er, cos tho' I ain't see 'er these two years, as was at the Darby, she were as plump as a partridge, as the sayin' is."

Then says that party, "I wouldn't go away without seein' 'er if I was you, for she 'ave been a stout figger, as I knows thro' a-pledgin' of a large-sized gownd for 'er, as she told me 'ad been a tight fit for 'er three years ago."

"Well," I says, "I shouldn't like for to intrude

on any one, but as I 'ave come so far I should like to see 'er."

Says that party, as 'er name were Munnus, "I'll step up with pleasure, and ask 'er if she knows the name."

I says, "Do so, and jest please to mention as a party in the name of Brown is below ; and will come up if agreeable."

I were kep' waitin' a good bit, and don't think as ever I was among sich muck and misery.

There was womin with babbies in their harms as was masks of filth, a-standin' gossipin' by the gin shops, as I should say 'adn't never seen a drop of water for weeks, and most on 'em black eyes, and their 'air's that matted as no comb couldn't never get thro', with a whole tooth left.

As to them babbies, they did make my 'art bleed, as was most on 'em frettin' thro' sufferin', with bad eyes and reglar wretched colds.

Talk about them ladies down in Westminster a-doin' rong in takin' in them hinfants to die, I should like to know 'ow many is left to die and rot with their own beasts of mothers, as did ought to be in jail, the wretches ; and I knows for a fact as them good sisters 'ave 'ad them wile 'ussies come and pertend to leave the child jest for the day, and never come back no more, but leave the poor dear little thing to die a-screamin'.

In course them sisters did ought to 'ave sent the child to the workus, but 'adn't the 'art to.

It's werry orful to think as there should be sich mothers in the world, as 'angin' is too good for, in my opinion.

Arter a bit, Mrs. Munns, she come down and said as it was the right party, as would be thankful to sec me if I didn't mind.

So up I went, and there in a back garret, a-settin' shiverin' on a chair, with a hinfant under a rag of a shawl, for tho' spring there was a bitter cold wind a-blowin', and not a bit of fire, was Mrs. Belper, leastways 'er ghost.

She bust out a-cryin' when she see me, and couldn't speak for sobs.

So I says, "Come, come, this won't never do, you're a deal too low."

She says, "I don't mind about myself, but," she says, "Fred's a-dyin' in prison."

I didn't make no answer, but I turns to Mrs. Munns, as 'ad follered me up, and says, "Would you mind, like a good soul, a-gettin of 'er a pint of stout and a biscuit."

She were off like a shot, and soon come back with it, as I made poor Mrs. Belper 'ave a glass on, and Mrs. Munns, she 'ad the rest.

"Now," I says, "let's 'ear all about it."

So she took and told me as 'ow Belper 'ad been

cort a card-sharpin', and got twelve months, tho' it wasn't 'im, but 'is pals as was robbin', and 'ad broke down under six, and 'ad sent 'er word that werry day, as he were a-dyin' in the infermery, and she says, "I aint got the strength to go to 'im, nor yet the clothes, for I've put away everythink, to keep us from starvin'."

So I says to 'er, "Well, then send for your clothes, and I'll take you in a cab myself," as was Pentonwille.

So Mrs. Munns, she said as she'd go and get 'er things out, as was only in for three and sixpence.

I took the hinfant out of 'er arms, and were surprised to find it that clean and tidy.

"Ah!" she says, "that's that good soul, Mrs. Munn's doin's, as 'ave the 'art of a Queen, tho' poor 'erself, as 'ave come every day and washed that boy, and begged some old things for 'im of a tradesman's wife as she've been nussin' "

I says, "She's a good soul, and it'll come 'ome to 'er."

Jest then Mrs. Munns come back with the things, as was shabby enuf, and when Mrs. Belper 'ad got 'em on, she tottered in gettin' up.

So I says, "You wants support, and must 'ave your tea or somethink."

Mrs. Munns, she says, "I were jest a-goin' to 'ave mine, and I'm sure if you'll both come into my

place, as is only round the corner, and 'ave a cup, I shall be proud."

I says, " You're a good soul, and I'll come with pleasure."

And so we all went, as were jest across the road, a fust floor front, as neat as a pink, tho' noisy, and as fresh as a rose, tho' there were a tent-bed in the corner.

I was thankful for a cup of tea, as I was a-starvin' for; and I must say as Mrs. Munns knowed 'ow to make a good one. But as I were a-sayin' as that poor Mrs. Belper wanted keepin' up, so 'ad a little brandy as I'd got with me in 'ern, as I took a thimbleful on myself, so did Mrs Munns, for we was all chilled.

As soon as ever that poor thing were at all up to the mark, 'er and Mrs. Munns went off to the prisin, for a naybour were a-takin' care of the other children, and I went 'ome.

No doubt there's a deal of charity done by the rich, as gives away their tens of thousan's; but, law bless me, that aint nothink to a poor soul as'll 'arve a bit of bread and drippin', as is all they've got, and not much of that, with a starvin' feller creetur, or give a bit of their loaf to a poor naybour's child, when there aint 'ardly enough to go round among their own.

Ah! it's a 'ard world, and them as prospers

in it often looks at the poor, and scolds over their bein' given to drink, as in course is a wile 'abit, but, law bless me, when you 'as every comfort about you, in course you don't go into a pub for a drain, as the sayin' is, but when you're wet thro', and cold, and wretched, and feels low like, why, then there's a many as flies to it. I'm sure the fault is nearly always poverty, and them as keeps only moderate straight, when they are so miserable poor, will 'ave 'evan for their beds some day, in my opinion.

I didn't 'ear nothink of them Belpers for three days, and then I went agin to 'ear about 'em, and called on Mrs. Munns, as told me as he'd got 'is ticket, and were let out the day before.

"Law!" I says, "wasn't he a-dyin', then?"

"Well," she says, "not esactly, but werry bad with 'is asmer, as he's subjie to, as the mill brought on."

I says, "'Ave she got 'im in that there miserable 'ole?"

"No," she says, "she's got a room in this 'ouse; and the second floor back."

I says, "Where did she get the money from to move?"

"Why," says she, "there's a charity as 'elps prisiners in distress, as give 'er a trifle; but," she says, "I'll tell 'em you're 'ere, for," she says, "if it 'adn't been for you, I'm sure she'd 'ave sunk,

and not 'ad the money for the cab to go and see 'im."

I says, "'That's not worth mentionin', but I should like to know wot he's a-goin' to do."

So arter Mrs. Munns 'ad been up, I goes up to see 'em, and shouldn't 'ave knowed Belper, not if I'd 'ave met 'im in the wilderness.

He were a-settin' with 'is little gal on 'is knee, and as soon as he see me he give way, like, a-sayin' "Ah! Mrs. Brown, if I'd 'ave took your advice—"

I says, "Oh, bother advice, there's lots as wastes their breaths a-givin' of it, but in gen'ral it goes in at one ear and out at the other, as the sayin' is; so," I says, "don't let's be a-lookin' back, but lookin' forard."

"Well," he says, "I'm a-thinkin' of hemigratin' "

So I says, "You don't look up to much in the way of 'ard work."

He says, "I shall soon get up my strength, and they say as a sea voyage might cure my asmer."

"Well," I says, "'ow's it to be done? "

"Why," he says, "'er uncle at Newmarket offered to send us out two years ago, when he wanted me to give up the turf, not as he ought to talk agin it, for he wasn't nothink but a post-boy, and 'ave made all 'is money over raciu'."

I says, "That's right enuf, that is, but remember

when he begun a-backin' 'is 'orses he 'ad some money, and never made a bet as he couldn't pay if he lost, as is all fair; but you kep' on a-bettin' on the chance of winnin', and when you lost, where was you but up a tree, as the sayin' is, and wasn't nothink better than a welcher."

In course I didn't want to 'it 'im too 'ard when he were that down, not as ever I can forget the trick as he played me at 'Ampton races, never, tho' I never told Brown, as I do believe he'd 'ave 'ad 'is life.

For I went to 'Ampton Races along with that Mr. and Mrs. Edwards, thro' 'er a-askin' me as a great favour, thro' bein' obligated to take the hinfant, in course, and a lovely day it were, all but the dust, as in course you must expect when there aint been rain for three weeks, and the water-carts don't reach to. We drove down werry genteel in a four-wheel carridge, as 'ad Edwards and a friend up in front, and me and Mrs. Edwards behind, as was seats like a short omblebus. Edwards wouldn't 'avo but two, cos of wantin' room for tho lunch, let alone the baby. I don't think as over I enjoyed myself more, tho' a tremenjous crowd. We 'ad lunch and see the races, and me and Mrs. Edwards was a-walkin' on the course, when who should come up but Belper, all a-smilin', and dressed that sportive like to make you starc, in a white coat and

a red shet-up 'at. He were werry friendly, and drored my arm thro' 'is'n, sayin' as I must come and 'ave some shampain.

I says, "Not a drop more," and were a-goin' to ask after 'is good lady, when they cleared the course, for a race; so I stood back with the rest and see Belper take off 'is red 'at and white coat, and put on a cap, and then he empties a lot of money out of a bag, as he 'ad with a strap over 'is shoulder, into 'is pockets, and done up the bag with 'is red 'at and 'is white coat in a bundle like, as he asked me to 'old for a minnit.

I see as he were watchin' that race werry intent, when all of a suddin he says, with a hoath, "Lost!" and down he ducks, and were a-creepin' away. Jest then a feller pounces on 'im, and collars 'im like a spider on a fly, a-sayin', "No you don't, you blazin' thief."

Belper struggled frightful 'ard to get free, but a lot come up, and the feller as 'ad seized Belper, and was a-draggin' 'im away, shouts out, "Collar the old woman in front, she's one of the gang," and off he went with a lot more.

In a hinstant I were pounced on. I says, "Let me alone; take your 'ands off me, as am a respectable married woman."

They says, "All right, we'll see about that."

I screams murder, and up comes two perlice, and says, "Wot's up?"

"Why," says the man as 'ad collared me, "we've dropped on a gang of welchers, and this is one on 'em."

I says, "Never! I don't know nobody of the name, but one as is a widder."

"Then," says the chap, "wot are you a-'oldin' that thief's things for, as we've been a-watchin' you a-talkin' together ever so long."

I says, "Come along with me to Mr. Edwards' shay, as will prove I'm respectable; and as to that feller's clothes, he asked me to old 'em a minnit."

A party as were standin' by, said as he'd 'eard 'im ask me.

They says, "You don't know 'im, then?"

"Yes," I says, "I do; as is a party in the name of Belper, as I met quite permiscous, jest now, as I aint see for ever so long."

So they come with the perlice to where Mr. Edwards' shay were, as, in course, spoke up for me, and the perlice said, "You'd a narrer squeak, I can tell you; for if I 'adn't come up, you'd 'ave been ducked, like they served that feller."

So, in course, I'd reason for to remember Mr. Belper, cos my clothes was a good deal tore about, besides bein' jeered at, and took for a bad lot.

I didn't illude to that, nor yet to 'ow they'd

be'aved, a-eomin' 'ome from Hepsom, but said as I'd get Brown for to rite to the unele at Newmarket, as is rollin' in riches, tho' only a small pnb; but 'ave 'ad wonderful luck, 'leastways 'ave got 'is 'ead serewed on the right way, as the sayin' is; and them as 'ave may go in for bettin', or any other blessed thing under 'evan, as the sayin' is, and they're sure to come out right.

Certingly that unele did come down 'andsomely for Belper, and said as he always blamed 'isself for 'avin' 'ad 'im stoppin' down there so long, as, in counse, were like a-leadin' of a thusty 'orse to the water; seein' as Belper always were of a sportive turn, and the second time as ever I see 'im, asked me if I'd be put down for a sweep, as I thought meant insults, but was only bets, as I don't 'old with, jest the same as playin' at cards for money, as a penny a dozen don't do no one no harm, but might end bad, so I never would let my young one's play not for nothink.

So them Belpers hemigrated, and I 'eard of them once or twice, as the sea voyage 'ad done 'im good, and they set up a shop in a small way, and wot with takin' boarders, they was doin' well at, as proves as goin' to prisin may do a man good, not as it's a way I should care to be done good, thro' myself. But I've always kep' friends with Mrs. Munns, as is a good soul, and no 'umbng, one as can nuss you like

a cat does a mouse, and never let you slip thro' 'er fingers, as is often done thro' even lettin' the fire out in the night, and yet not oue to wake you up a-puttin' on coals like a shower bath, as is a great shock to anyone as is that low as they can't rally. She'd been in a 'ospital, 'ad Mrs. Muuns, afore all this ere fal-lal come in about young ladies bein' nusses, as in my opinion wants to know too much.

So as I were a-sayin' to Mrs. Padwick, races is all werry well for them as looks on, tho' there's many a bleedin' 'art under a smilin' face, not as it matters to them young lords, as loses their 'undreds like drops of water in the oshun, but 'ave led many a young feller to finger the till, as is sure to go out of their depths, as made young Beeton drown 'isself in the river Lee, leastways would 'ave done but for a boat 'ook as 'itched 'im out by the eye, as in course he's gone blind with ever since, but 'ave 'ad 'is lessou, tho' I see 'im at Hepsom with a patch over it, but no doubt 'ave seen the folly of 'is ways for all that, as is no doubt a warnin'.

Not as parties takes a warnin' the same as Janc Elders, as I'd give a full month to and let 'er 'ave 'er 'ollyday Easter Monday for all that, as took and stopped out all night, so in course I give 'er the sack when she walked in quite cool Toosday mornin', and then to go and pison 'erself and say as she'd been with 'er aunt all night thro' a-missin' of 'er

train, and the Magistrit to say as I must be a in'uman 'retch, as would be sure to take 'er back.

I says to 'er aunt as come to me, I says, "My name is Brown, not Green, as you seems to think." I says, "I've 'ad enuf of parties as stops with their aunts all night thro' a-missin' the train, but," I says, "it won't wash, as the sayin' is, and if that Magistrit thinks me such a 'retch, let 'is good lady take the gal into 'er service, but she don't darken my doors no more, tho' 'er aunt may be ever so respectable, thro' keepin' of a coffee shop in the Deptford Road, as is no doubt all right in the main, but don't suit me, tho' never inside the doors of one in my life, and 'opes as I never shall be. Not but wot I've knowed parties as kep' 'em as was that respectable as Queen Victorier 'erself might 'ave took refreshments there, as were all fust class, and that's wot Mrs. Edwards took to, and made a good thing out of it thro' 'is connections, as was all a turfy lot, but no bettin' nor nothink sportive allowed, tho' he always stuck to 'is trade, as were a book maker, and got a sperrit licence at last, so 'ad a new front, with plate glass winders put in, as shines all down the road, and 'ave often took tea with 'er, as is always cheerful company, and he often wants to put me on to a good thing, thro' a-givin' me of the straight tip; but I says, "No, thank you." I says, "I want to keep above the turf as long as I can, but aint no

wish to be on it escep' for a walk on a fine spring day, when you can put your foot on five daisies at a time, as shows as the racin' season is a-comin' on, as is certingly the time for to see the turf at the best."



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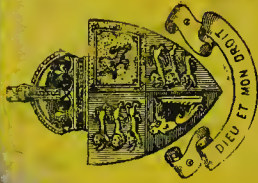
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